To the Reverend Mr Green at C. Rising
Gerke Rewerseham

1560/726.

THE

Virtue, Honour and *Ingenuity*, RETRACTING ERROR:

AND

The *Invalidity* of pretended CONSTANCY or HONESTY; and of all other *Excuſes* for Delaying it.

WITH

Some ſure *Signes*, and ill *Effects* of OBSTINACY.

By ELISHA SMITH, *M. A.*
Lecturer of *Wisbeech* in the Iſle of *Ely*;
And Rector of *Caſtle Riſing* in *Norfolk*.

Humanum eſt Errare.
The ſhorteſt Folly is always the beſt.
The Laſt *Error worſe than the Firſt.*

LONDON,
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1560/726.

TO

The Right HONOURABLE

ROBERT WALPOLE,

FIRST

Commiſſioner of the TREASURY,

One of His MAJESTY's moſt Honourable PRIVY COUNCIL, &c.

Moſt Honour'd SIR,

HILST I am perſuading others to the reputable Duty of Retracting *a Miſtake, 'tis a great Pleaſure to me to Practice it in a particular Inſtance relating to* YOUR SELF *at* Caſtle Riſing; *For aſmuch as I was miſinform'd, at my coming to be* Rector *of that* Borough, *that I was*

The DEDICATION.

Senior *Burgher*, quatenus *Minister*; *and on that Presumption offer'd to Vote* irregularly, *in Your Presence, for a* Member *of Parliament. I glory in Your Leave, and in this Opportunity of making this* Publick *Revocation of that Mistake. Next to the Satisfaction of not being guilty, I shall always place that of* Receding *from it, in Time. Tho' the most excellewt Natures should not delight to* Pardon; *tho' it was not agreeable to the Spirit of* GREATNESS, *which animates Your whole Behaviour, to forgive and restore a mistaken* Friend, *still I shall continue faithful to the Tenour of this* RECANTATION, *which I owe to You, and Truth.*

I have neither Permission, nor Ability, to draw any Lines of Your High CHARACTER *and* MERIT: *But what I can't express I will, with Thousands, admire in the Sphere of*

YOUR HONOUR's,

Most devoted

Humble Servant,

E. Smith.

THE *Virtue, Honour* and *Ingenuity,* OF RETRACTING an ERROR.

I Have ſearch'd for all Extenuations and Abatements, to gratify my own Candor, towards the Erroneous Opinions and Practices of ſome, otherwiſe Good and well-meaning People, and can reſolve them into nothing, ſo generally as *Miſtake* and *Inadvertency.* Whoever is diſpoſed to take the Benefit of the beſt Excuſe, in Imitation of the greateſt Examples, inſtead of upbraiding, I profeſs myſelf ready to turn their Advocate. The enſuing Pages have no ſuch haughty Aim, as to pretend to gain a Victory over any Man's Perſon; but over his Incogitancy and Miſtake, they are very humbly and earneſtly ſollicitous. And, What Reader may I not modeſtly hope to prevail with, to acknowledge the One, and quit the Other? If I demonſtrate his doing ſo, to be a ſupremely Rational, Ingenuous and Religious, Action; and, with other Ad-

vantages, muſt derive upon him the Eſteem and Praiſes of all the Wiſe and Virtuous.

THIS excellent, eaſy Virtue, would certainly come more into Faſhion, where there are Diſputes and Differences, if it was not brow-beaten and ſuppreſt, by falſe Notions of the Honour of *Conſtancy* and *Steadfaſtneſs* to One's Opinion; and of the Diſreputation of being a *Turn-coat*, or miſtaken. I believe every-body will agree with me, That this is, now, the moſt Univerſal Cauſe, why Men continue ſo long, or altogether in detected Miſtake: They confirm themſelves, almoſt to a Man, to be ſtill what they were, becauſe they think one and the ſame Thought, *That they can't come off from it with Honour:* The Error following from that, is, to judge it to no Purpoſe to be made ſenſible of One; where the Mind decrees not to own, it determines of Courſe not to perceive it. Thus it defies the Acceſs of Conviction in many, and turns it out of Doors when got in, in others. Such is the Honour, ſuch the Temper which keep up *Party*; nor is there any thing elſe to ſupply it with vital Spirits.

THERE is undoubtedly, a Difference between being in an Error or Inadvertency, and an aſſumed Purpoſe never to relinquiſh them; the not being convinc'd they are ſuch, and reſolving not to be ſo.

TO this laſt abounding Diſpoſition of Mind, I addreſs the following Sheets, to induce it to quit that baſe deſperate Reſolution, from the Senſe of Virtue; the bounden Reſpect to Truth, together with the Eaſe of finding it: The indiſputable Sentiments of Honour and Glory, and Characteriſticks of good Senſe; by removing every tenacious Hindrance, and bewailing the ſad Effects of Obſtinacy. There can be no Diſpute about the Miſtake, when it is evidently ſhewn to deviate from *Holy Scripture*, *Fact* and *Experience*, the impartial Standards of Truth, and Regulators of our Judgment; and ſhewn in the Spirit of Friendſhip and Meekneſs too, which is the true Spirit and Temper of the Goſpel; the Spirit and Energy of Perſwaſion moreover. I deſign no greater Uneaſineſs to any body, than the Beauty of farther

Light

Light and Honour, which will appear, as I hope, in opening this new Door of Conſideration.

'TIS a Fallacy to think, That every one who differs from another in Opinion, muſt neceſſarily ſet up for Superiority of Judgment and Learning. The Arrogance of believing One's own Eyes before anothers, and yielding to clearer Evidence rather than obſcure, is eaſy to be forgiven: At the ſame Time he offers his Reaſons and Arguments to others, who won't be convinc'd (as they ſay) by *Arms*, but by *Arguments*; he deſires not, expects not, to perſwade on Account of Authority, but the Validity of his Proofs and Reaſons. *Homo, qui erranti comiter monſtrat viam, quaſi Lumen de lumine ſuo accendat, facit.* They are not his Reaſons or Authority, but that which has Juriſdiction over you, and me, and all of us in Particular, *viz.* Every One's *own* Reaſon and Allegiance to the Authority of Truth, which convinces: And who need ſcruple ſubmitting to ſuch a Friend and Guide as one's ſelf, better inform'd, or at leaſt better conſidering?

IF ſome would behave themſelves with ſo much Diffidence and Temper, as to acknowledge themſelves *capable* of being in the Wrong, One might be induced, from that Teſtimony of Ingenuity and good Senſe, to think them in the Right: But if they are *really* capable of being Miſtaken, it is moſt certainly their Duty to doubt whether they are, or not; and from doubting to weigh, conſider, examine impartially; ſee and hear with their own proper Eyes and Ears, That the *Truth* which is ſo plain, lovely and uniting, may no longer be diſdain'd, and overlook'd. If upon the eaſy Scrutiny, it ſhould be found on their Side, to be more comforted and confirm'd in their Sentiments; if againſt them, as willing to yield, and no leſs generous to own they have been *Miſtaken*; and declare the ſame with a Noble Frankneſs, a Conſcious Humanity, and a Religious Speedineſs: From thence forward, they may be ſure of enjoying the Glory of Sincerity and Uprightneſs, in following nothing but the *Truth*, and of diſdaining to be detain'd by any corrupt Motives whatſoever, from the charming Duty of embracing it immediately,

ately, and conſigning up our Opinions to the Determination, and our Conduct and Behaviour, to the Guidance of it. By making that healing Declaration openly, and abiding by it conſtantly, they are further enſured from the ſad Effects, various Inconveniences, and real Reproaches, inevitably attending upon an inflexible Adherence to an Error, and Inadvertency, of ſo conſiderable Conſequence, as that under preſent Conſideration. Nor can they fail of being recompenced with manifold Advantages: For they may depend upon Reaping from within, the mighty Joy and Conſolation of being handſomly deliver'd from the wonted Contradiction, between a bad Action and an averr'd good Meaning; and from without, the Applauſes and Encomium of all Lovers of Peace and Truth.

A *Rational* Creature can't perform a more Genuine Duty, nor worthier Deed, than to yield to the intrinſick Force of Truth, as ſoon as apprehended; and to cultivate the Diſpoſition of admiring it even in an *Adverſary*; and every where, and at all Times, ſubmitting to its welcome Conviction: For he gets the greateſt Victory, who being conquer'd, gains the Truth. And whoever puts in for that Prize, muſt ſet up that goodly Diſcipline in his Mind, which may impartially denominate him as ready to be overcome, as to conquer: *Paratus vincere, & vinci.* By yielding to Truth apparent, we obey the Deciſion of the appointed Judge of all Doubtfulneſs, take the Advice, and comply with the Direction of GOD himſelf. We follow our proper Guide, our beſt and deareſt Friend; dearer than Thouſands of Gold and Silver, than Father or Mother, Wife or Children, Superiors, Equals or Inferiors, Antients or Moderns: *For ſhe is a Treaſure unto Men that never faileth, which they that uſe become the Friend of GOD. In her is an Underſtanding Spirit, Holy, One only, manifold, ſubtil, lively, clear, undefiled, plain, not ſubject to Hurt, loving the Thing that is good; quick, which cannot be letted, ready to do good, kind to Man, ſtedfaſt, ſure—Having all Power, over-ſeeing all Things, and going thro' all Underſtanding—She is a pure Influence flowing from the*

Glory

Glory of the Almighty: The Brightneſs of the Everlaſting Light: The unſpotted Mirrour of the Power of GOD, *and the Image of his Goodneſs.* If we know that God hath appointed it, What occaſion for farther Witneſſes? If ſure he hath ſaid it plainly to all Underſtandings, What need we any other Guide of Controverſy? Who are they that have got a Priviledge of not ſubmitting to him?—But every Citizen may be perfectly certain of obeying *his* Voice, who ſubmit to plain *Scripture*, and *Reaſon*: And upon good Grounds, promiſe themſelves his Peace within their Spirit, as long as they are conſcious of his Truth only reigning there; and that their Conformity to it, made ſure by proper Enquiry, and ſincere Removal of every Hindrance and perverting By-end, is their bounden Conformity to their Maker, and an Approach to their Happineſs: Following the Way that leads to Truth, and the Truth that leads to Life; as ſoon as well known, the Beauty thereof engages Love, and when it is loved, it begins Felicity.

AS Light is the Perfection and Glory of the Sun, ſo the proper Luſter, and Perfection of a reaſonable Soul, is the Love, Poſſeſſion, and Fertility of that active Truth which centers in Duty, influences the Will, and heals its Diſtempers; regulates its Choice by the Choice of God, its Liberty by the Liberty of of God; and renders it one with him, and in that Unity like him. It is the Reſting Place of the Soul: *All the Earth* (ſays *Zorobabel*, 1 Eſd. 4. 36, &c.) *calleth upon the Truth, Heaven bleſſeth it, all Works ſhake and tremble at it, and with it is no Unrighteous Thing. It endureth and is ſtrong, it liveth and conquereth for evermore. With her there is no accepting of Perſons, or Rewards; but ſhe doth the Things that are juſt, and refraineth from all unjuſt and wicked Things, and all Men do well like of her Works—She is the Strength, Kingdom, Power and Majeſty of all Ages; bleſſed be the* GOD *of Truth; great is it, and mighty above all Things.* The Mind keeps itſelf ſound by the Means of it; and living upon its own Congenial Food; always preſerves its Health and Vigour: *Job* (34. 3.) hath obſerved of one of its Appetites, *That the Ear tryeth Words, as the Mouth*

Mouth taſteth Meat. The Love of it ſeems a Natural Reliſh, and Inſtinct implanted in the Soul. GOD has taken Security, as it were, of Man for his Obſequiouſneſs to it, by inſerting a Native Homage to it, as the *Firſt Principle* and *Dictate* of our Nature: Conſequently, To be either wilfully indifferent to the Diſcovery of it, or reſiſt, or ſtifle it, is to remain willingly depraved in the moſt material Concern, and Capacity of our Being. Falſhood is too deformed and irreconcileable to the Underſtanding, for any to be found hardy enough to own they have eſpouſed it. But as for Truth, every-body is even pleaſed, and takes Notice how beautiful is the Deference to it, in Converſation. There is apparently ſomething ſneaking in the Soul, if not in the Countenance of him that declines ſuch common Honeſty; but you are as conſtantly affected and delighted with the viſible Greasneſs, Quality and Honour in the Face of him, who cheerfully yields to it Evictions.

THE Truth of Words is when they agree with a Man's Thoughts; the Truth of his Thoughts when they agree with Things themſelves: Or which is the ſame Thing, when the Truth in the Subject, or Underſtanding agrees with the Truth in the Object, the Repreſentation with the Thing repreſented, the Picture and Deſcription with the Things painted or deſcribed, So that the Truth we all contend for, and are bound to Submit to, is eſtabliſht in the neceſſary Reſpects, mutual Relations, and immutable Agreements and Diſagreements between Things and Things. Was it, or could it be, otherwiſe, every Thing might equally be a proper Means for evry End; every Argument and Medium equally ſtrong to prove every Sort of Concluſion. Which Abſurdity and Impoſſibility is palpable, is diſavow'd by all, and that compleatly proves the other. No *Human* Underſtanding can create a New Truth, no more than a *real* Being in Nature: All its Function and Ability is to *diſcover* it by joining or ſeparating of ſigns [or *Idea's*] as the Things ſignified by them do Agree or Diſagree with one another; and it may diſcover Falſhood by marking out the Agreement or Diſagreement of Signs and Idea's otherwiſe, than as the Things ſignified accord or differ;

that

that thoſe are falſely joyned and compounded which ought to be ſeparate, thoſe falſely ſeparated and divided which ought to be joyn'd. If then the Baſis and certainty of the Truth inqueſted lies in Things themſelves, as GOD has conſtituted them by *Nature*, or inform'd us by *Revelation*, and preſcribed to us Rules of Conduct and Demeanor with regard to them, it follows, that our Underſtanding can make nothing true or falſe, which in itſelf is otherwiſe; but muſt take Things as GOD has made, and preſcribed them to us. The Reaſon of Things in this latitude, the Son of *Syrach*, ſays, *the firſt Man knew not perfectly, no more ſhall the laſt find out*. *Tully* obſerved very well, *Opinionum Commenta delet dies, Naturæ Judicia confirmat*. 'Tis not Antiquity, nor this, or that Author, becauſe not *Man*, that makes Truth; they may tranſmit it as Witneſſes, they may ſet forth their diſcovering Reaſons, and according to their Goodneſs and Veriſimilitude are they to be accounted of.

WE are eſpecially to obſerve, ſince our *particular* Intereſt or Inclination have not the making any Thing true, or falſe, our Inclinations to one, or t'other, are ever carefully to be reviſed by the Underſtanding. Being loath to perceive the true State of the Matter is no manner of Reaſon; though indeed the beſt Abundance have, for rejecting a Thing as falſe, or uncertain, which is abſolutely true; nor is a Wiſh, however vehement, able, to conſtitute that true which is not ſo. For nothing becomes ſo becauſe it pleaſes; but becauſe it is true, therefore it muſt pleaſe, at leaſt, be conformed to. Love to Truth is otherwiſe the meer Pretence, and we utterly falſe or indifferent to the Attainment of it; in order to be True and undiſturbed to ſome other choſen Intereſt, or Humor; the guilty Unwillingneſs of ſeeing One diſappointed, or the Other croſt, is that which begets the unreaſonable Antipathy, in ſo many, againſt conſidering the Reaſons and Evidence of being in the Wrong.

SINCE the requiſite Knowledge of Truth is the Aſſimulation and Conformity of the Underſtanding to Things; and of the Conſcience to Rules, when truely acquainted and irradiated with the real Agreements

and

and Diſagreements of the one, and the Meaning of the other; if you would be reſolv'd what is Truth, or what Kind of it does moſt import us, go to *Nature*, go to *Holy Scripture*, and to the proper Means of underſtanding them: They are the Authentick Standard by which we are obliged *to prove all Things*. And for ever adored be the good Providence of GOD Almighty! Who has diſplay'd and rang'd before us thoſe Truths, which affect our greateſt Concernments either in this World, or the next, in a moſt conſpicuous Manner, and ſubjected them to an eaſy Attainment and Perception; every One carries the Touch-ſtone about him for Tryal and Diſcovery. He has graciouſly dealt by the Needs and Occaſions of our Souls, in His Holy Scriptures, as in Nature by the Wants and Conveniences of the Body: What is moſt uſeful he has wiſely made moſt common, plain, and procurable: Litle Search will find out Water, or Fire, litle Pains will help the Corn to grow up to Bread, the Fruit-Trees bear of themſelves and court Acceptance of their kind Preſents; but as for Diamonds, precious ſtones, or other valuable Impertinences as they are fitted for a few Perſons, ſo are they to be met with in few Places, ſurrounded with Difficulty, reſerved in Darkneſs and Caverns, hard to be reſcued to Light, and polliſht for the Uſe of the Curious: In like manner, has the Allwiſe Provider ſerved our Souls with the Truth, more precious than Rubies, becauſe indeed extenſively neceſſary; that which concerns the Peace and Welfare of this World, and the Salvation of our Souls in the next, is as common as Day Light, and as cheap as Bread. The fundamentals for our Happineſs may be read by him that runneth; a ſincere enquiry can't well miſs of them. "But commonly the "remoter any is from a neceſſary Article, the leſs plain "and obvious is it to our Underſtanding, and there-"fore if in theſe we do err and miſtake, 'tis not to be "wonder'd at". 'Tis a ſign that Philoſopher was unacquainted with *Revelation*, who ſtyled it a Buſineſs of that *arduous Labour*, as to be brought out of a deep Well; What if there be ſome of that depth in the *Bible*, that which is moſt uſeful Preſents itſelf upon the ſurface, as common as the Waters that cover the Sea? Would

we

we but once in this our day agree, to ſuffer plain Things to influence, how Happy, Peaceable, and Good might we all be? If our Party diſputes were brought to the Arbitration of the perſpicuous Directions for obeying Governors, ſo many, and clear, on purpoſe for the Underſtanding of the *People*, all unquietneſs would Vaniſh, Inadvertencies be rectify'd, a paſt doubts weighed down with preſent Duty, and Parties be no more. But if we will be perverſe to make difficulties where GOD has made none, and Study untowardneſs to thoſe known Verities of Peace and Godlineſs, we bring our Soul into Danger, and the World into Confuſion.

WE are arriv'd ſo far, as to be agreed what Truth we ought moſt to liſten to in the Debate: Of What kind is that, which is our apparent Concern, Virtue, Wiſdom and Probity to be determin'd by: And perceive it to be a plain Thing to thoſe, who are duly enclin'd to receive it, according to the Commandment, *in the Love thereof*; and to be defective in that Inclination, is not only a Criminal Indifference, but an effectual ſhutting the Door againſt what we pretend to invite in, and has indeed a Right to enter, and take Poſſeſſion of our Hearts, and put an End to our Diviſions: And therefore to be Guilty of a long Inadvertency concerning it, is undoubtedly ſuch a Failure and Sin, as will be charg'd Home to our Account; and with the heavieſt Aggrevations, if we perſiſt therein. What does that ſuggeſt?—But the greater Need of all Haſte and good Conſcience, to recede from, and retract, as ſoon as put in Mind of it. I would fain preſume, we ſhall be more inſtantly diſpos'd to it, when we fully conſider,

SECONDLY, The Credit and Renown, the ſingular Glory and Commendation of acknowledging a Miſtake, and deſiſting from it. This Argument has Senſe enough to be felt and imbib'd with Pleaſure, by every Underſtanding, that has any ſound Taſte left for Reputation, and the Sentiments of Honour: Glory ſure will prove a ſufficient Spur—Truth and Error being mix'd together, is the ordinary Occaſion of many falſe Reaſonings. That which makes any great Error plauſible, and paſs diſguis'd and un-

 diſcover'd

diſcover'd, is its Artificial Mixture with ſome Truth. There is a pretty Repreſentation of this, intended in the Fable; *How Truth at firſt preſented herſelf to the World, and went about to ſeek Entertainment; but when ſhe found none, being of a generous Nature, that loves not to obtrude herſelf upon unworthy Syirits, ſhe reſolv'd to leave the Earth, and take her Flight to Heaven; but as ſhe was going up, ſhe chanced* Elijah *like to let her Mantle fall; and Falſhood waiting by for ſuch an Opportunity, ſnatch'd it up preſently, and ever ſince goes about diſguis'd in Truth's Attire.* Differing Opinions are not *all* falſe, nor unreaſonable; if the plain Things and obſcure, which are blended together, and made equally clear by that Means, were fairly parted, the Difficulty would be fairly explicated, and the Diſpute com-promiſed: For there is no ſuch Thing as plain Scripture oppoſing plain Scripture; but the obſcure and plain, thro' the Raſhneſs, Hypotheſes, Intrigues, and other evil Paſſions of Men, are made to diſpute with one another; and much of the Conteſt is about the *Manner of Things*; the Knowledge, much leſs the Deciſion thereof, is, for the moſt part, purpoſely omitted in thoſe Holy Pages: Hence the jumble of Religions, Notions, and Diſcords. How many Diſputes are of Paſſion, againſt Paſſion?—'Tis the Fate of Reaſon, dwelling among Men, to partake in their Infirmities; and as long as they over-look that which is plain, and loſe themſelves in that which is doubtful, they are ever Learning, and never able to come to the Knowledge of the Truth. Reaſon is not the Rule of itſelf, but of the Arguments uſed to ſhew and unfold it: A Demonſtration of juſt Conſequences, drawn from true Principles, is the ſtanding Teſt of what *appears* reaſonable. But as Evil deceives, by falſifying Good; ſo Error does by Truth. Would you be glad then to know the ready way to unravel the Myſtery of Miſtake, diſcern the Error, and be put in Poſſeſſion of the Truth? I need not recommend to the *Four Maxims* of *Plato*, nor the *Four Rules* of *Des Cartes* for finding; becauſe there is nothing wanting, nor deſir'd, in ſo plain a Caſe, but a due *Attention* and *Recollection* of certain clear Truths: They are, thank GOD, as Keys in our Hand, to examine that which is doubtful, and re-

fute

ſute what is falſe; and ſo compleatly unlock the perplexing Difficulty.

BUT here begins the Apology; Whereas the Minds of us Men, are as generally ſubject to Prejudice, Miſtake and Inadvertency, as our Bodies to Diſeaſes: It is ſo far from being diſhonourable for the Mind of any, to be found in either, that it is a very common Thing: And to think all one does in Purſuance of ſuch an Opinion, to be right, is one of the gratefulleſt and commoneſt Fallacies reſiding in the Head of Man. That which appears, at one Time, like a Demonſtration to a Man, by a greater Light preſented, dwindles into a Sophiſm, fit for nothing but to be given up. I have known ſome doubt, and oppugn the *Innocency of Error*; but no one ever queſtion'd the *Ingenuity* of receding from it. We are all deceived in ſome Things; and frequently in one another: Only here is the Difference, Some have the virtuous and ingenuous Freedom of Mind, and value for Truth and Peace, as to own and retract it; others are unfortunately beguil'd and with-held from it, by *falſe* Notions of Stedfaſtneſs; and are ſtill Poſitive they are in the Right, when all Proof of their being ſo, and with that, all Credit, is departed from them. Let Men once come into the Belief of ſo certain and excellent a Poſition, *viz.* That it is more inglorious to be always deceived, than to confeſs oneſelf once Miſtaken; they would no more think it their Honour to perſiſt ſo long, or have always ſomething to reply, tho' juſt as much to the Purpoſe, as ſomething may perverſly be ſaid for any Thing. Is it an Honour? Or an unconſcionable Injuſtice to Truth, to make it more their Buſineſs to be thought they are in the Right, than *really* to be ſo; and when their Heart miſgives them, they are not ſo? Is true Glory and Praiſe, as diſtinguiſh'd from the falſe, any thing, but what is built in the Relation of obeying Truth, and imitating that which is good, preferably to all other Compliances?

WHOEVER has that good Senſe of Religion and Share of Humility, to acknowledge a Miſtake of Conſequence, will ever be reſpected as one who has the Furniture of Virtue, Integrity, and true Greatneſs of

Soul in him. Good and great People, have been Guilty of Inadvertency and Miſtake; but they are the beſt, the greateſt, who confeſs the One, and retract the other, as ſoon as they perceive it: And who does not, can neither be good nor great. Tho' it is very illuſtrious and moſt excellent in itſelf, the Noble Preſident of St. *Paul* has render'd it the more abundant comely, *Acts* 23. 5. *Then ſaid* Paul, *I wiſt not Brethren, that he was the High Prieſt; for it is written, thou ſhalt not ſpeak Evil of the Ruler of thy People.* In the obvious Senſe of which Words, and the Opinion of Dr. *Hammond*, and others, the great Apoſtle confeſſes, that he did amiſs, excuſes himſelf from Inadvertence, and freely retracts the Miſtake, as ſoon as ever put in Mind of it. He makes an Apology for what he had ſaid of the *High Prieſt*, v. 3. *God ſhall ſmite thee thou whited Wall; for ſitteſt thou to judge me after the Law, and commandeſt thou me to be ſmitten contrary to the Law*; the Command in *v.* 2. was *to ſmite him over the Mouth.* The ſmart Violence, and ſudden Injuſtice, might put him into ſuch Diſorder, as not to have that Law preſent to his Mind, which forbad ſpeaking Evil of the Ruler of the People. GOD might permit him not to recollect, that by that Opportunity, the *Spirit* of *Prophecy* might make an Eruption againſt *Ananias*; and at the ſame Time, give in before the Bench, a Teſtimonial who St. *Paul* was: It being an acknowledg'd Caſe with the *Jews*, that he who acted as a Prophet, was not under the Obligation of that Precept; whilſt the Spirit of *Paul* himſelf, as ſoon as put in Mind by ſome of the Standers-by, ſaying, *Revileſt thou GOD's High Prieſt?—Then ſaid Paul, I wiſt not Brethren*, &c. *i. e.* Under ſuch a Percuſſion and Outrage upon an innocent Part, which had uttered nothing but the Truth, I did not juſt then adve it was the *High Prieſt*, or *Ruler* of the People, wh had given that an illegal and unreaſonable Order; being ſo contrary to his Office to have done it. Whether *Ananias* was *regularly* High Prieſt, or no, is n the main Queſtion; becauſe 'tis certain, he was leaſt *Ruler of the People*, in the Confeſſion of the poſtle; and by the Injunctions of *Holy Writ*, none th

that *Authority* ought to have Evil ſpoke againſt them. This is the plaineſt, and far more likely Senſe, than that other latent concealed one (ſo differing Commentators call it) which would bring in St. *Paul juſtifying* himſelf, by rendring οὐκ ἤδειν, *I did not acknowledge* him to be the *regular* High Prieſt, being advanc'd (perhaps) by Bribery: For all that Nicety, whether he was ſo promoted, or not; or whether οὐκ ἤδειν, will readily admit that Interpretation; rarely imputable to it in the *N. T.* ſeems to be abſolutely ſuperſeded, by what is plain and manifeſt: (1.) That he was at leaſt Ruler of the People, *vid.* Dr. *Hammond's Note*, *Luke* 3. 2. (2.) St. *Paul's* immediate Application of a Scripture Rule, *Ex.* 22. 28. againſt his own Words, towards ſuch a one, clearly declare, he had committed a Miſtake. Nevertheleſs, he was ſtill ſo under the Conduct and Impulſe of the *Divine Spirit*, as ſoon to correct the Inadvertency he had fallen into, as a Man provoked. And this is ſufficient to preſerve the *Dignity* of an Apoſtle, his Guidance into Truth, and his inviolable Love and Adherence to it. And if the Promiſe to the Twelve, and the Seventy, *Matth.* 10. 19, 20. *Mark* 13. 11. *Luke* 12. 11, 21, 14. ſhould be *Perſonal*, and St. *Paul* not being one of that Number, tho' an *Apoſtle*, then there is not the leaſt Suſpicion of any Derogation from that Promiſe. This Apoſtle was remarkable for his *Zeal* in all the Parts and Conduct of his Life: When converted to Chriſtianity, that Religious Paſſion was tranſlated from Sin to Virtue, by his varying the Object, and growing zealouſly addicted to that Way of Truth, which before he was furious againſt; and alſo by a more gentle, harmleſs Conduct of it. He ſays, he found ſo much Mercy of GOD, to be convinc'd of the Truth, by reaſon of his doing what he did, ignorantly and in unbelief: It was ſurely a great Favour and Grace to be ſo, ſince he acknowledges if he had not become a Convert, his Ignorance and Unbelief, with never ſo good Intention, or miſtaken Judgment with it, had proved fatal to him. If therefore a miſtaken, or miſinform'd Conſcience, will not juſtify a Man's Oppoſition and Unpeaceableneſs, how right ſoever his Proceedings may be in

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his own Eyes, according to the preſent Judgment of Things; it remains, That he and his Conſcience lye under an Obligation, not yet comply'd with, of being regulated by better Information, and the ſerious Conſideration of plain Truth and Duty over-look'd; and ſeeing they are ſo very plain and clear, they are fit to be the perpetual controuling Rule, for all Conſciences in general to walk by: They are always ſufficient, when attended to, to rectify the Mind, and in that, the Conduct of all common People in general; whether they make a Judgment what they ought to do, or reflect upon what they have done, as right or wrong; that Judgment, and that Reflection of their Mind, is their *Conſcience*, both as it guides and bears Witneſs to their Actions. Altho' 'tis a Sin for a Man, not to act according to his Conſcience (ſuppoſing it miſtaken) ſtill in Things of great Importance, as the Peace of Society, and Submiſſion to Governors, wherein the Sacred Injunctions are exceeding clear and poſitive, it will be his Crime not to ſtudy the eaſy, and purſue the needful Diſcernment; becauſe, we can no otherwiſe juſtify following Conſcience as our Guide, than as it is guided, not by diſputable, but the plain evident Obligations and Preſcriptions of Holy Scripture and Reaſon. This way of reſolving Doubts, is intelligible to all, in Duty neceſſary, in manner eaſy, and both ſo conſpicuous, as to have no Intricacy at all; 'tis certain to be found by every one upon ſearch; it can be hid to none but thoſe who mightily diſuſe, or abuſe, the Faculty of Thinking.

IF St. *Paul* therefore acknowledg'd himſelf Guilty of an Inadvertence, and was not aſham'd to retract and renounce it Publickly (a whole Aſſembly being Witneſs) and immediately and willingly by Stands corrected by his implacable Enemies too, as ſoon as ever they hinted his forgetting ſuch a Direction of Scripture, no Body, tho' never ſuch a *Zealot* in their Way, ought to deem it any diſparagement to recede from a Miſtake, when *friendly* put in Mind of it. He was, at the ſame Time, an Inſtance of Inadvertency, and of the higheſt Honour and Virtue: For he had no ſooner an hint given him of the former, but he took it kindly,

and

and corrected himſelf; his Love to Truth was immoveable and impartial, for he fitly reſpected it, and paid his ready Submiſſion to it; as well from an Enemy, as the deareſt Friend; hardly a Fault or a Human Infirmity (which is next to none) before it was converted into a Monument of the moſt Heroick Virtue; it was more than expiated as ſoon as committed; He was in a Paſſion, he forgot himſelf for a Moment, to ſhew that no Man is totally exempted from that Frailty, and that the greateſt meer Men may, more frequently, have their Intervals of Inadvertencies and Miſapprehenſion: But then he *Publickly* retracted this Miſtake; this ſignifying, that it was beneath no Man living ſo to do, in a Matter of ſuch Conſequence, as entire Submiſſion in Word, as well as Deed, to the Civil Powers ſet over us. He no ſooner recollected himſelf by what the Standers by ſaid, but he ſaved them the Trouble of quoting the Scripture againſt his own Practice, *For it is Written*, ſays he of his own accord, *Thou ſhalt not ſpeak evil of the Ruler of the People.* He knew full well that the *Scripture* was the ſacred and impartial Rule ordained to Guide and Govern us all, whatever Differences there might be amongſt us; he deſired no fairer Play for the Evangelical Truths he was contending for, than to have all the Differences and Variance between them, Submitted to the plain Deciſions of it.

IT would be endleſs to enumerate all great Perſons, and Preſidents, who have openly, even under their Hand, retracted Errors and Miſtakes, when convinced of being guilty of them. St. *Auſtin* got as much if not more Reputation by his *Retractations*, than all his other Works: In his Preface to them he very finely and ingeniouſly declares, " that what he was about to do was not to be defer'd; that none but your Imprudent ſimple People would find Fault with him for finding Fault with himſelf, and ſome of his own Writings and Poſitions; but whoever ſays I ought not to have ſaid thoſe Things, which I am now cenſuring and retracting, ſays the Truth, and Cloſes with me. And he Conſcientiouſly cites ſome Scriptures as the Motives and Inducements of his ſo doing; *If we Judge ourſelves, we ſhall not be judged of the Lord*; *He that*

that offends not in Word the ſame is a perfect Man; it remains therefore that I Judge myſelf under that One Heavenly Maſter, whoſe Judgment of my Offences, I deſire to eſcape; and whoever ſhall read theſe Things, I deſire, may not imitate me Erring, but *me* Retracting, and profiting for the better". He was once a *Manechee*, and when he came to reflect upon himſelf for it, acknowledges to GOD *Non tu eras, ſed error meus, erat Deus meus*, Thou O GOD was not the GOD I ſubmitted to and Obeyed, but my erroneous Opinion; yet he recover'd the ſoundneſs of his Judgment after that Corruption, it came upon him, as it were the Fleſh, of a Young Child, when the Truth had touch'd and cleanſed it.

EUSEBIUS acquaints us that *Beryllus* Biſhop of *Boſtra* having broach'd ſome dangerous Errors about the Divinity of our Saviour, and being convinced by *Origen* gave him great Thanks by Letter for his Conviction, and kiſſed the Hand that thus brought him back.

WHEN an Error concerns the Publick Welfare, none ought to think it above them to retract it, ſince the renowned Queen *Elizabeth* thought it Her Duty and Advantage to Practice that nobleſt Humility; in the laſt Year, but One, of Her Reign, ſhe ſet forth a Proclamation againſt the Monopolies of Her own granting, as ſoon as ſhe was made ſenſible by the Enquiries of Parliament that ſhe had been miſled. Whereupon the Houſe of Commons order'd the Speaker attended by *Eighty* Members to return Her *Majeſty* Thanks. She gladly took that Occaſion to return them theſe Expreſſions among others. " I owe you Hearty Thanks " and Commendations, for your ſingular Good- " Will towards me, not only in your Hearts and " Thoughts, but which you openly expreſſed and " declared, whereby you have recalled me from " an Error proceeding from my Ignorance, not my " Will. " *&c.*

SEVERAL of the fineſt Reaſoning and deepeſt Learning in our Nation have thought it an encomium upon their Judgment to recant an Error. Mr. *Lock* in his *Human Underſtanding* generouſly retracts

tracts one in his Preface, which he had committed [concerning Liberty and Will] and does it too, (for theſe are his Words) " With as much Freedom and " Readineſs as I at firſt publiſh't what then " ſeem'd to me Right, thinking myſelf more con- " cerned to quit and renounce any Opinion of my " own, than oppoſe that of another when Truth ap- " pears againſt me " : and *p.* 151. 3^d. *Edition.* " As a Lover of Truth and not a Worſhipper of " mine own Doctrines, I own ſome Change of " my Opinion; neither being ſo Vain as to fancy " Infallibility, nor ſo diſingenious as to diſſemble " my Miſtakes for Fear of blemiſhing my Reputa- " tion " Mr. *Norris* in the End of his *Beatitudes* 4^th *Edition* retracts an Error about the Nature of Sin which he had advanced, Dr. *Whitby* writ the 2^d Part of the *Proteſtant Reconciler* as an Anſwer to *his own* firſt Part. Before him Biſhop *Stillingfleet*, in like manner, receded from his *Irenicum*: To all ſuch Inſtances, the Words of the Poet may be apply'd,

Si non erraſſet fecerit ille minus.

And if we know any Modern Strayers from the Truth, and well inclin'd to return to it, let us give them the ſame Complement. Whatſoever Errors, Miſtakes, or Inadvertencies, any of us may be guilty of, Behold how they may become an Occaſion of Glory! If we have no other way of greatning our Characters, and arriving at laudable Fame; this of *retracting* is ready, this of *Recanting* is open to us. 'Tis certainly a virtuous and a glorious Ambition; It is an Honour in the higheſt Veneration, with the greateſt and wiſeſt: And are they not the beſt Judges? It ſenſibly betokens a Largeneſs of Soul, Uprightneſs of Heart, a free generous Mind, and a Conſcience under the Direction of GOD and Religion, and not the Seducement and Corruptions of Men and Party.

AND whoever will glorify himſelf this Way, above his Brethren, let us delight to honour him, and congratulate with him, as with an *Ingenuous* Man: Nay, honour'd he will be by GOD and

good Men: GOD Almighty, the Supreme King of all, does as good as ſend an *Herald* to ſuch a One, to inveſt him with a *George and Garter*, and conſtitute him *Knight* of the moſt Noble Order of *Truth*. Nor needs there an Act of Parliament, to declare it glorious to retract a Miſtake; it is exceeding worthy and commendable in itſelf, unleſs perchance it would be the Means of promoting thoſe Revocations. The *Athenians* beſtow'd an exquiſite Encomium upon *Pompey*, when they told him, "Thou art "ſo much the more a God, as thou confeſſeſt thy-"ſelf a Man". So the Honour and Encomium is the ſame (whether our *Univerſities* beſtow it or not) to ſay, *Thou art ſo much the wiſer, by acknowledging thyſelf miſtaken.* Beſides, to encourage Recoveries to our Duty, and render them Univerſal, there's Orders come down from *Court*, That *Party-Deſerters* muſt not be treated as Spies, but as miſtaken Friends: For the *Royal* Prudence, *deſires rather to leſſen their Numbers by reclaiming them, than by making Examples* *. Thoſe that obtain Pardon, and thoſe that did not divulge their Inclinations, or Perjury, in open Rebellion, upon their future Peaceableneſs, may plead His *Majeſty's* Forgetfulneſs of paſt Diſcontents, and aſſume a Title to Royal Grace. His moſt juſtly celebrated Grace and Goodneſs, armed with the due Meaſures, and the admirably choſen Inſtances of *Juſtice*, how mightily does it increaſe its attractive Force? Like a Loadſtone, armed with a proper Proportion of Iron, prodigiouſly augments its Attraction; ſo the other is powerful enough to win over a Breaſt of *Iron*. The Conviction is full of Benignity and Awe, in Imitation of the Divine Compound of Love and Fear, which GOD makes uſe of in his governing over, and treating with Men. He takes Pleaſure in thoſe who will be ſo far won over to Hope in his Favour, He holds out the Royal Scepter, and bids all the *Miſtaken* be free from the Chains and Slavery of Prejudice, and ceaſe from injuring themſelves; To

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* *Vid. the* King's *laſt* Speech, *before he went to* Germany.

ceaſe

ceaſe biting the Lip; To plane the contracted Brow, and look more benignly upon their Friends, and no longer alienate their Affections; To elate the Down-look, brisk the lowring Countenance, in Proſpect of *his* ſhining upon them; To be no longer moody, nor deaf to the Duty of a *Chriſtian*, nor blind to their Intereſt and Happineſs as *Engliſh* Men, and *Proteſtants*; To abate that Reſentment, which has tranſported them too far; Moderate furious Zeal, and mix a little more Light with it; To give up unreaſonable, give up fruitleſs Oppoſition, and ſubmit to the firm Empire of their Happineſs, and only Security; and forbear cavilling at his Proceedings, when they ſhould be ſhewing Obedience, or to look for Favour without Repentance, or Places without deſerving.

BUT if they will ſtill fortify themſelves in Error, againſt Light and inward Conviction, or the obvious Means of better Information; all the bad Effects of Obſtinacy, will be the Iſſue of it. It becomes their Pertinacy, not their Perſeverance; for this is only in a good Thing, the other in that which is evil and pernicious. It argues an immoderate Partiality, culpable Bigotry, and a moroſe State of Mind and Judgment, in Hoſtility againſt the Light of our Duty. It declares a Temper which would rather be pleaſed, humour'd, and ſtill deceiv'd, than admit unacceptable Truth, effective of the Change they have no Heart to; tho' never ſo neceſſary and ſaving; ſo clearly, nor often propounded by GOD, if it grates upon the favorite Error, it has cold Entertainment. This reſolute Addictedneſs to One's Opinion, or rather Contumacy of Mind, is the greateſt Adverſary to Truth, and the Peace of the World, the Unity of the Spirit, and the Bond of Peace; the Prolonger of Diſputes, Hinderer of Reconciliation, and the Author of innumerable Miſchiefs, Publick and Private. And as we are bound to commiſerate one anothers mutual Inadvertency, we ſhould endeavour to remove it by all gentle and fair Means. We ought to be Champions for the Knowledge of the Truth, that leads to Unity and Quiet; not Slaves to Ambition, Vain-glory, or any Sect, Diviſion, or Party,

of whatever Denomination: And forthwith forego that untenable Vanity of never being in a Miſtake.

The great thing wanting towards Conviction, is a Willingneſs and Goodneſs of Mind to be undeceiv'd, upon Suppoſition of being in an Error——Is not a Retreat in Time as good as a Victory? May not a Gariſon be ſurrender'd upon as Honourable Terms, as kept?—— But 'tis an ignominious Pride and Villany, to be made ſenſible of One's Miſtake, and not deſiſt from it. To believe Things true or falſe, right or wrong, not from the Manifeſtation of Evidence, nor its proper Reaſons and Arguments, but meerly as they ſerve a Turn, and agree or diſagree with Prejudices, is a dreadful Inſtance of the Perverſeneſs of Man's Heart, and of Party-depravation. 'Tis an excellent Maxim of the *Imperial* Philoſopher, *(M. Anton.) That Man is no leſs free who ſubmits to the Opinion of another, than he who continues obſtinate to his own, ſuch a Change being often the Perfection of Wiſdom and Judgment.* To yield to a Victory of Reaſon, relinquiſh a detected Error, own a Miſapprehenſion; is both a bounden Duty, and the greateſt Commendation of One's Ingenuity and Reaſon: For it is being conſtant all the Time to *Reaſon*, which muſt neceſſarily be the trueſt Courage, Strength, Glory and Perfection of a Man, as long as he is a *reaſonable* Being; to quit a Miſtake, is the Proof of his Nature, and a Sample of a generous high Spirit; as not to do it, betrays a Meaneſs and Baſeneſs, beneath one who calls himſelf a Man. All worthy of that Name, ought to live up to the eſſential Obligation of growing *wiſer*. But, How can any grow wiſer without ſome Change of his Mind? Or, How that Change effected, without opening the Mind to farther Diſcoveries and Improvements; or, Removing ſome Error, in Poſſeſſion? That there can be no other rational and honourable Conſtancy, but that I ſhall make appear by and by.

THE Errors and Inadvertencies, which have no ill Conſequencies, wrong neither GOD nor MAN, are harmleſs Things, innocent Differences; but what have an ill Influence upon Conduct, and make a palpable

palpable Digreſſion from our Chriſtian Obligations, they are certainly blame-worthy; very worthy to be retracted. To be a *good Subject*, to the Sovereign Power placed over us, is, by the Tenor of Scripture, made eſſential to the Endeavours of being a good Chriſtian; the Non-performance of the firſt, is a prodigious Hinderer and Slanderer of all thoſe Duties, which are connected together by *Charity*; a bitter Zeal, Anger, and Diſſatisfaction, diſlocates the Principles, and beats off the mild Impreſſions of the Chriſtian Religion; poiſons the Soil and lays waſte the ſeveral Incloſures, where its Virtues and Graces ſhould be growing in Quietneſs and Godlineſs of Living. However the Neglect of a Duty of that high Nature, and wide Influence, may concern our Temporals, it does as ſurely affect our Eternal Intereſts, as GOD has ſtrictly enjoin'd the one, and forbid the other. The Rule of that Duty, for Inſtance, is to lead quiet and peaceable Lives; the Rule of Peace and Quiet is, *Not to ſpeak Evil of Dignities*; but if the *Reverſe* is the Produce of our Sentiments and Opinions, we muſt conclude them not ſo right as they ſhould be; by their Fruits ye may know them; if the Fruit is bad, ſo is the Tree; 'till this is alter'd, the other muſt be naught; if one is to be amended, the other is certainly to be eradicated: If then you would compleat the Amendment, it muſt be by the Atonement of Retracting. And it would be bravely reſolved, to let that be ſeen in ſome Publick Revocation; if not ſo Publick, let it be audible to your Neighbours; if not audible, at the leaſt, viſible to all Men, in a ſilent Alteration in Words and Behaviour: Let Bluſhes confeſs Conviction, and the Shame of holding out any longer, *erubuit, ſalva res eſt*, contrive ſome way or other, to make Profeſſion of quitting your Miſtake, and you'll ſee all good People careſs and eſteem you; Think you innocent and well-meaning: When you have taken that Step, both eaſy and honourable, you are met half-way towards ſigning an Agreement between all the wiſe and peaceable. 'Tis the baſe Principle of *Papiſts*, never to free a *Proſelyte* from the Suſpicion and Jealouſy,

louſy, which cleaves to a Defection; but there is in *others*, a Prerogative of Mind, which diſtinguiſhes itſelf by Candor and Benignity, and that is a Security to *New Converts*, that they ſhall be inſtated in all the Truſts that belong to new Friends, and be put upon a level with them in Advantages. How much better is that, than to continue ſtiff in the wrong, and in the Torture of envying others the Poſſeſſion of the Truth? Acting as if it was the higheſt Crime to be convinc'd of a Miſtake, or inglorious and unchriſtian to be peaceable, or contented, or of one Mind, or to forbear the condemn'd Sins of evil Surmiſing; of thinking ſeditious Jealouſies, and Perjury, lawful: If theſe are not Sins, and head-ſtrong Errors, fit to be deſiſted from, What are?

I KNOW 'tis a certian *Axiom*, That nothing perſwades Men, or ſatisfies their native Deſires of being in the Right, but Truth, or the *Appearance* of it: But, with Submiſſion, is it poſſible for Contradictions and palpable Abſurdities to carry with them ſo much as the Appearance of Truth? They are detectable to common Senſe, upon the leaſt Attention: and it is a ſure Way of finding out what is not the Truth: For Truth is ever equal and Conſonant with itſelf, *Omne verum omni vero conſonat*; but Error is full of Diſagreement: Notorious Inconſiſtency is an *Opprobrium* to Reaſon and beſpeaks the beſottedneſs of it. The *Non-jurors* proceed fairly and conſiſtently; the *Papiſts* with regard to their Religion Act the ſame coherent Part, both out of Conſcience, both out of Intereſt. But for *others* to be forward Inſtruments of their own Ruin, and be ready to ſet Fire to the Train ſo viſibly laid to blow up our General Felicity, by joining with the former, *is ſuch a prodigious Inſtance of Folly and Impiety* (ſays the *Addreſs* of the *Archbiſhop* and Clergy of the Dioceſs of *Canterbury*, *June*, 28. 1716.) *that we want Words to expreſs our Deteſtation of it.* One ſide, with the Church of *England*, profeſſes Paſſive Obedience and Non-Reſiſtance, together with the Right of preventing the *Ruin* of the Church and Civil Liberties; the other at the Times of the loudeſt Profeſſions of it, ſo famouſly forgat the Practice, as to undo

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the *King* who relyed upon it: And now again upon the late revival of the Cry, play booty with the Doctrine, prevaricate with their own Tenets, by deſerting the Performance. Comment the Doctrine by the Practice, and the Duty with the moſt proper Occaſions of performing, and you are both ſurpriz'd with Inconſiſtency, and impoſed on by ſham; the ſtrenuous Doctors and Aſſertors are Poor forgetful Performers: Nor ſeem they to regard it in their Actions as a Duty, but meerly as ſubſervient to their Intereſt, or Humour; when pleaſed and preferr'd, it becomes forthwith Sacred; when diſpleaſed with ſo ſmall a Grievance, they have not the Aſſurance to Name, *i. e.* Want of Places, they, in an Inſtant, become Actively turbulent, querulous, reſiſting, railing Subjects; and when the Hand fails, continue the Aſſault with the Tongue; which they teach the delicious Spite of *Speaking Lyes all the Day long*, and freely initiate them into the Holy League of *being ſet on Fire of Hell.* They willingly let the very *Whiggs* and *Republicans*, as they call them, out ſtrip them far in their beloved Doctrine. Let them continue True to Paſſive Obedience, they would certainly be agreeable to Governours; but if ſo unconſcionable to deny it to thoſe, who make *Law* the Rule and Meaſure of Governing, and againſt whom they can alledge no Diviation, whilſt they aver it, by Principle, unlawful to refuſe it to a Prince *ſubverting* and *diſpenſing* with Laws; if actually provok'd for nothing nevertheleſs ſatisfied in Conſcience, they ought not to be provoked with Hardſhips, are they not foul Practitioners? Pretenceleſs inexcuſable Murmurers? The preſſure of their own Tenets urges on the Inconſiſtency, their boaſted acknowledgments confutes them without an Oppoſer, they clearly infer the Practice of oppoſing and inveighing againſt the Adminiſtration of their Governours from the Neceſſity of Paſſive Obedience and Non-Reſiſtance; of broaching and diſperſing Lyes from the Obligations of ſpeaking the Truth; of maligning and ſtirring up Strife from thoſe of being quiet and minding their own Buſineſs; of contradicting the Deſign of their Oaths, from the ſacred Tyes

of

of fulfilling them; ſeveral are able to juſtify their Aſſertion that the *King*, *Lords* and *Commons* are a *Faction*, by the Mathematical Evidence that a little Part is bigger than the Whole; abundance make Proof of their Averſion to the *Pretender* by carreſſing *Abſolute Indefeaſible* Right, for his only Sake; and every other Jealouſy and Diſcontent, which can in the leaſt promote his Intereſt, and invite the Calamity: Whilſt their concern for the Church of *England* and the *Proteſtant* Religion is equally demonſtrated from their cold Diſlike of Submitting to the Protection of that Tool of *Rome*; a great many pretend they are better ſatisfyed in his *Legitimacy* the more impoſſible it has grown to diſcover it, tho' at the Time of the ſuppoſed Birth when the Nation was beſt able to Judge, the whole Nation vehemently ſuſpected an Impoſture: And how many think of retrieving their Way to Honours and Royal Favours, by Calumny and the moſt undutiful Oppoſition? And ſtill Hope to have what, by thoſe Methods, they make more and more Impoſſible to ſucceed in. Is there any Pleaſure? Can there be any Reputation of *Judgment* in acquieſcing under theſe and many other Abſurdities, Diſhonours to Reaſon and Conſideration? Such Inconſiſtencies with our Preſervation and Welfare, and the Duty of a Chriſtian, and a Subject, hang like a Milſtone upon a drowning Cauſe, never to emerge more. The greatneſs of the Temptation ſometimes excuſes a Proceeding; but what Temptations is there in *Popery* or *Slavery*? ?—All the Proteſtant World abroad have liſſen'd to our Jars with Amazement, that a Controverſy ſhould laſt ſo long; the true State of which at firſt Sight is, *Bona ratio cum perdita, Mens ſana cum amentiâ bona denique ſpes cum omnium rerum deſperatione conſligit.* But be it known for the Redemption of our National Credit, that this Scene of Infatuation, inconſiſtency and Contradiction has happen'd, but in Part, to the People of the Realm; the main Sticklers and Diſturbers of King *GEORGE* are the dregs of Reaſon, the loweſt in Fortune and Underſtanding; who are giddy with their own Credulity, may be hired to live in a perpetual Lye, who devote their Belief and the Service of their Faculties to the ſordid ignoble Perſwaſive of an intoxicating

cating Treat; whoſe Wickedneſs is owing to their Weakneſs, have not Senſe enough to own a Miſtake, and ceaſe an Oppoſition, that can effect nothing but their own Ruin and Puniſhment.

BY finding out, in this Caſe, what is falſe, you at the ſame Time diſcover, what is true and right; *Rectum ſui eſt Index, & Obliqui:* Freedom from Contradiction, is one Cognizance of the Truth; the Plenty of it, a plenary Evidence of Error. But there is one complicated Abſurdity ſtill behind, worſe than all the reſt, *viz.* An Unchriſtian Rebellion to an Authority we all pretend to ſubmit to. Are not the various (unmerited) Calumnies, Seditious Reflections, Jealouſies, Diſaffection, Rage, Animoſity, Diſcontents, which ſo many are Guilty of, againſt the King, and thoſe put in Authority under him; all Contradictions, all Violations of thoſe *Holy Scriptures*, requiring the Contrary at our Hands? If the Opinion and Practice of ſuch is right, then the *Bible* muſt be falſe; but if you will allow that to be the Meaſure of Duty, and Judge between us, you muſt needs regulate both, and own yourſelves in the wrong: *Let God be true, tho' every Man a Lyar.* If there was nothing elſe in the Struggle but Truth, it might ſoon be decided, who is in the Right. Let thoſe Places of Scripture, which are certain, and confeſs'd on all Hands, outweigh the doubtful and diſputed; and there is an End of the Conteſt. There's a Proverb in *Italy*, *'Tis better be condemn'd by Ten Phyſicians, than one Judge*; 'tis in like manner better, the Majority of the Nation ſhould condemn, than the Sacred Scripture pronounce Sentence againſt you. Take then your *Bible*, and ſee whether thoſe Things are ſo. Turn to *Acts* 23. 5. How readeſt thou? The *Reading* will imprint the Conviction deeper. It adviſes you to look into *Ex.* 22. 28. where you will find the ſame Prohibition, *Of not ſpeaking Evil of the Ruler of the People.* Turn to the ſolemn Cautions of *Solomon*, Prov. 24. 21. *Fear thou the Lord, and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change:* And *Eccleſ.* 10. 20. *Curſe not the King, no, not in thy Thought; for a Bird of*

the Air ſhall carry the Voice. To the Directions of St. *Peter*, 1 Epiſt. 2. 13. *&c. Submit yourſelves to every Ordinance of Man, for the Lord's Sake; whether to the King, as Supreme, or unto Governours, as unto them that are ſent by him, for the Puniſhment of Evil Doers; and for the Praiſe of them that do well*; and v. 17. *Honour the King.* And in his 2 *Epiſt.* 2. 10. *Preſumptuous are they, and ſelf-willed, that deſpiſe Government, and are not afraid to ſpeak Evil of Dignities.* If theſe clear Authorities of God, uncontroverted in Senſe, were not enough, I could recommend to more. I might juſtly urge our *Saviour's* deciſive Words, *Matth.* 22. 21. *Render therefore unto Cæſar the Things that are Cæſars*, &c. becauſe if we give them their genuine Interpretation, from Hiſtorical Circumſtances, our Bleſſed Lord therein acknowledges the Divine Right, and Legality of a Government, that had much ſuch another *Revolution* Settlement, as ours at preſent *. In a true Account of Things, That Text ought to be the laſt in the *Bible*, which the Adverſary ſhould think of ſcreening their Conſcience under. I might freely inſiſt upon the 13 *Chap.* to the *Romans*; for that is full as little to their Purpoſe, after they have interpreted *Nero* to be the Reigning *Cæſar*, whom St. *Paul* enforces Obedience unto, becauſe he came much worſe into the Seat of Government †. If our Saviour was upon Earth, or St. *Paul* in *Great Britain*, they would both approve of, and ſubmit to, the Preſent Eſtabliſhment, as a moſt *Righteous* and *Divine* Government; and perſuade by Word of Mouth, as they have done by Letter, to a moſt Quiet and Loyal Submiſſion, an entire Peace, Unity, and Contentment. And, Why ſhould any among us pretend to have a more tender Conſcience than they?

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* Vid. *Preface of a Sermon, Preach'd at* Wisbeech, *in the Iſle of* Ely, *the* Sunday *after Queen* Ann's *Demiſe.*

And Dr. Turner's *Sermon, before the* Lord-Mayor, 1716, *upon the ſaid Text.*

† Vid. *Preface* ubi ſupra.

Or,

Or, Than they, better underſtand the Divine Right of Governors?

What other therefore is your Dutiful Submiſſion to the King, and all put in Authority under him, but your unconteſtable Duty and Submiſſion unto GOD? Nothing more is deſir'd of any, but the Submiſſion of their Underſtanding, and Conſcience unto the Lord God. Ponder of, and ſettle it in your Hearts, whether 'tis a *Party*, or a General Duty, to obey *Chriſt*, obey St. *Paul*, St. *Peter*, &c. and to be a *Chriſtian*. If you will be refer'd by the Bleſſed Scriptures, there is nothing wanting, or to be wiſh'd for, to unite us together; but Obedience to thoſe moſt Holy Precepts. Let the impartial Preachers and Enditers of them be Referrees, we are agreed. If you will ſtand by thoſe Sacred Authorities, you are accus'd of all, convinc'd of all, to be in the Wrong: For tho' you think you have a Right to differ from ſome People, you certainly have none at all to differ from, and be diſobedient to the other. There's no ſuch Thing, as a Diſpenſation, in all the Chriſtian Religion, to tollerate Perverſeneſs. Return then from whence you are fallen, *i. e. Paſſive-Obedience*, and *Non-Reſiſtance*. Repent and do your firſt Works; and when you are converted, ſtrengthen your Brethren: As you were not contented to be miſtaken alone, be as forward in removing Miſtakes. Take Refuge in the Example of St. *Paul*, there is Affinity in the Caſe; make him your Excuſe, make him your Pattern, in openly, ingenuouſly, owning your Inadvertency, to the Rule of your Duty. You may truly own further, That you have been in a Cauſleſs Paſſion againſt your Governors a long Time; tho' they have not order'd you in Perſon to be *ſmitten*, for your uncommiſſion'd Freedoms againſt them. 'Tis a Shame to think it a Diſgrace to revoke an Error *Publickly*, when ſo many great, wiſe, judicious; ſo many bright and moſt excelling Patterns, have made the Practice praiſeworthy, Heroick, and well-belov'd of GOD, and Man. Every body of Senſe and Virtue, will Honour and Applaud thoſe that do; readily and friendly Apologize for them, "*Britons* are but Men, and

Men

Men may err and be Miſtaken: Forget and forgive moreover according to the Rule, *If thy Brother repent forgive him.* Is there then any Spark of Chriſtian, or Britiſh Ingenuity, left in our Boſom? There let it glow, and inflame our Reſolutions to omit no Time nor Opportunity of partaking of ſo excellent an Honour; to ſee ourſelves accoſted from Heaven with Truth as Bright as the Sun, and from the Region of *Great Britain* with *Sovereign* Mercy, Lenity and Forbearance, like unto GOD's, is enough to make Scale's fall from our Eyes. The ſhorteſt Folly is evermore the beſt; the confeſſing and being ſenſible of it, leſſens it; but adherring and reſolutely juſtifying, doubles and trebles it, and makes the laſt Error worſe than the firſt: To oppoſe ſuch Truth *is kicking againſt the Pricks*, which will prove the Opponent's wounding and torment; and to deal ſcurrilouſly, is to the effect of the *Proverb, he that Spits againſt the Wind Spits in his own Face.* Railing is nothing but a plain Confeſſion of the Defect of Reaſon; every vile and unworthy Oppoſition ſubſcribes to the Truth of the Cauſe it ſets it ſelf againſt. So little good is like to come of Truſting in Perverſeneſs; the more we palliate the more we only aggravate our Fault; ever fumbling for Reaſons and Excuſes to juſtify our Conduct, but never able to find ſo much as one.

The True *Reputation of* CONSTANCY *and* STEADINESS *ſtated: And all other* EXCUSES *conſider'd.*

THE firſt and Principal Hinderer, and moſt general Retarder of the Noble Duty I have been treating of, is that falſe Notion of Conſtancy and Steadineſs, which heedleſly and unfortunately prevails in the World. The *fancied* Honeſty, and *imaginary* Honour ariſing from thence, with regard to the ſeveral acquired Miſtakes in Human Life, the Sects of Religion, and Parties of Men, continues to be a pernicious Obſtruction to Conviction, Unanimity, and Peace. It will therefore be of as extenſive Benefit to be rightly appriz'd in this, as to have our Inadvertencies rectified, Miſtakes quitted, and a ſpeedy End put to our Differences and Diviſions. In purſuance of this Deſign I muſt diſtinguiſh between true, and falſe Conſtancy; one a Virtue and real Honour, the other a Vice and real Obſtinacy. And ſince *Obſtinacy* is a Recrimination generally retorted by all Perſons at Variance, I ſhall endeavour, before I finiſh, to give ſome notifying Marks and Criterions, wherein all People are agreed, that by them we may plainly diſcern, each for himſelf, where Conſtancy ends, and Obſtinacy begins.

I. *CONSTANCY* is deſervedly held in high Reputation in the World; the Stamp of Value current on it, is no more than its due: And I would by no Means offer to impair it, when once it will ſubmit to be meaſured by the *Honour that comes from* GOD. Joh. v. 44. *How can ye believe who receive Honour one of another, and ſeek not the Honour that comes from GOD only?* So notorious an Hindrance is the Reputation, which corrupt Men deal out to one another, to the embracing the Plain and Important Truth that comes from GOD, that our *Saviour* in Order to make the Aſſertion more ſtrong and affecting,

fecting, commits it to the Way of Interrogation, *How can ye believe? &c.* Implying a remarkable Diſtinction between the Honour which *Men* commonly agree to give one another, and that which comes from *GOD*; that one is partial, the other impartial, the firſt falſe and deluſive; the latter true and inſtructive, being founded in the Love of Truth and ready Obedience to it; that it was impoſſible they ſhould believe and be converted, as long as they had both ſo falſe a Notion, ſo firm an Inclination, and ſo ſtrict a Friendſhip for it, *Joh.* xii. 42, 43. We find many of the *Chief Rulers* (conſiderable *leading* Men among the People) even when convinced in their Conſcience, would not *confeſs* CHRIST; the Reaſon follows, *becauſe they loved the Praiſe of Men more than the Praiſe of GOD.* Therefore choſe ſtill to go along, publickly, with the Miſapprehenſions, deceived, and diſeaſed Opinions of others, contrary to the reallity of Things, and the bright ſhining Light of their Duty; rather than forfeit the dear Reputation of Conſtancy, or undergo the ſuppoſed Shame of deſerting the Side they had been long of, or the Diſgrace of being excommunicated and deſpiſed for Tergiverſation. 'Tis true, the Scripture very much recommends Firmneſs and Conſtancy; *That we hold faſt the Profeſſion of our Faith without wavering; be not toſſed too and fro with every Wind of Doctrine by the ſlights of Men. Beware leaſt you alſo being led away by the Error of the Wicked, fall from your own Stedfaſtneſs. Seneca* defines Wiſdom, *ſemper idem velle atque idem nolle*, always to chuſe and refuſe the ſame Things: And there are other magnanimous Sentiments and ſparkling Thoughts in him, and other Authors about it *. There are aſſumed Motto's among ourſelves, ſuch as, *mutare aut timere Sperno. Animus ſemper idem* with a Repreſentation of Swimming againſt the Stream and *Moveor immotus* with the

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* *Magnam rem puta, unum Hominem agere;*
Præter Sapientem autem nemo unum agit. Senec.
Ante omnia hoc cura ut conſtes tibi. id.
Nihil eſt, quod tam deceat, quam in omni re gerenda conſilioque capiendo ſervare Conſtantiam. Cic. de off.

Emblem

Emblem of a Needle in a Sea-Compaſs ſtill moving but inflexibly, towards the *North*. I ſay theſe fine Sayings and Emblems, are apt to be admired; and the Maxims and Injunctions of ſacred Scripture beget an high Opinion and Idea of Conſtancy; and very apt they are to ſtiffen a Man's Mind to the Perſwaſion he is of, and confirm him very Agreeably that he is in the Right, for no other Reaſon, than becauſe he is reſolv'd *not to Change*: Whereas thoſe Places of Scripture, and every juſt encomium ever yet paſs'd upon Conſtancy, all proceed upon a *previous* Suppoſition that you are in the Right; not one of them gives you Poſſeſſion of the Truth, but take for granted, that diligent Examination and ſincere Endeavours had been uſed in finding out that, and no corrupt Conſiderations conducted, or conducts, your Judgment and Adherence to the Sentiments you are of. What ſaith the Scripture? *That ye be ſtedfaſt, unmoveable and eſtabliſht*; in what? But as it follows, *in the Truth, rooted and grounded in the Faith*. Neither does it oblige us to *hold* every Thing *faſt*, but ſolemnly, as in the ſame Place, *that which is good*; and to find out, that *all things are commanded to be proved*. We are *to contend earneſtly* but then it is *for the Faith*. Was it otherwiſe; every Praiſe and Exhortation to Conſtancy ſerves to harden the Man more in Error, and inſtead of emancipating from, fetters him down the faſter in his Miſtakes; it ſhould inveſt him with Virtue and the Aſſurance of Truth, but behold? It eſtabliſhes him titely in the Wrong, in Contumacy, intemperate Aſſurance, Contention, in a Reſolution not to be convinced, not to change, or ſo much as ſuſpect himſelf in the Wrong, in extream Perverſneſs, and what not?

AS long as Obſtinacy in the Wrong mimicks the true Conſtancy of Mind, and Glory of being ſtedfaſt in the Right, rather than not partake in the Applauſe, People will be coming in for a Share, by adhering Manfully and Immoveably to the Side they have eſpouſed, whether Right, or Wrong; nay, after they are ſhrewdly afraid they are in the Wrong of it; and ſooner than not be ſtaunch and *honeſt*, as they call

call it, Sacrifice any other Duty to that Credit. This Vice and Diſpraiſe by having Conſtancy for a Second, often filches the repute of Virtue, and ſo renverſes the Foundations of Praiſe; it puts on her Livery and therewith deceives the Simple; becauſe it gives a luſtre and Addition to her, it is therefore ignorantly and unjuſtly Thought to give a Reputation to Vice, whereas it renders it, all the Time, the more exceeding ſinful. Now, all theſe untoward Notions and miſchievous Miſtakes would immediately be removed by any of us, who will pleaſe to attend ſeriouſly and impartially to theſe following Reflections.

I. THAT the Honour *which comes from* GOD is the only true Standard of Honour and Reputation. If he is in the Right, Diviſions and Parties muſt be in the Wrong, in ſetting up any other unequal Model of Praiſe and Eſteem. It differs little from refuſing to be referr'd to him; rather, it comes full up to the *calling Good Evil, and Evil Good, putting Darkneſs for Light, and Light for Darkneſs.* But, if we be ſo far tractable as to allow Him the Right of Deciding and Controuling, or of Knowing, or Diſcovering wherein the Virtue of Conſtancy and the Commendation of Stedfaſtneſs conſiſts, then we may be certain.

2*dly.* THAT they only do conſiſt in being Conſtant to important Truth, and the plain Will of God, and ſtedfaſt to clear Reaſon and Duty. Our Conſtancy and Fidelity are under all and every Obligation we ſtand in to theſe great, good, ſaving and uniting Things, and no other. For in Matters of little or no Conſequence, where only Gueſſes and Conjectures are converſant, there Conſtancy is not a Virtue, neither Obſtinacy a Fault; therefore the worth of the former muſt ever be derived from the worth of the Thing we firmly adhere to. As in Martyrdom, 'tis not the Death, but the *Cauſe*, that makes the Martyr; ſince ſtaking the higheſt Wager may be an Argument of Confidence, as much as

as of Truth, it always proves the firſt, but not always the latter; ſo, 'tis not the perſevering in an Opinion, tho' ne'er ſo inflexibly, nor long, that forms a virtuous Conſtancy and a Perſeverance in the Truth, but the *Grounds* and *Reaſons* for our Perſevering: If they are incompetent and unjuſtifiable by the plain Truths of Scripture, then inſtead of taking off the Fault by Excuſe of Conſtancy, and Pretences of Stedfaſtneſs, we only faſten it the more on, and change the good Character of Perſeverance and Firmneſs into immoveable Tenaciouſneſs, and a Reſoluteneſs to remain under a deluded State of Judgment. I ſaid *plain* Truths and Directions of Holy Scripture; for they are doubtleſs qualified to decide; 'tis to no Purpoſe to expect what is dubious ſhould terminate a Doubt, or one Uncertainty clear up another. Is Adherence therefore to conſpicuous Truth, manifeſt Duty, and a Cauſe clearly and undoubtedly good, the *Virtue* of *Conſtancy?* and cleaving to the contrary of theſe, the *Vice* of *Obſtinacy?* what elſe is the Adjuſter and Apprizer of our Steadineſs, or of our Change; but the Meaſure of Truth, and of Goodneſs? Then alſo it demonſtrably follows, That our Obligation to receive Evidence ſufficient for our Conviction, with reſpect to either of them, is ſuperiour to our Obligations to Stedfaſtneſs.

THE Rejecters of ſuch ſufficient Evidence, are denominated in the *New Teſtament*, ἄτοποι, abſurd People, whom all the appointed *Topicks* for convincing a Reaſonable Creature, can't move nor alter: And what we tranſlate in ſeveral Places, (*Col.* iii. 6. *Eph.* v. 6, *&c.*) *Children of Diſobedience*, in the Force of the Word, ſignifies Children of *Incredulity*, an unperſwadible Contumacy, ſuch as ſets Conviction and Perſuaſion at Defiance. Whilſt the *Bereans* are renowned in the Volume of the Book (*Acts* xvii. 11.) for the Temper meet for it, as more *noble* than others, *i. e.* Εὐγενέστεροι, of a more manly, and rational Genius, having the Ingenuity, Candor, and free Diſpoſition, towards the Truth, reigning in their Breaſt, to examine and compare; and not like others, remain inflexible againſt ſuperior Light and Evidence,

but to yield, and be convinced by it, as in Duty bound. *Whatſoever doth make manifeſt, is Light*, as the Scripture atteſts. " * As we need no other Marks " to diſtinguiſh Light from Darkneſs, but Light it- " ſelf; ſo neither any other Marks to diſtinguiſh " Truth, than the Brightneſs of the Evidence which " ſurrounds it, and ought to convince the Underſtand- " ing," and oblige it to ſurrender notwithſtanding the Oppoſition made to it from other bye Conſiderations; it ought to embrace and ſalute, whereſoever it finds Her, with that Readineſs and Satisfaction, as the Eye opens to the Light; for where the Underſtanding is not vitiated by wilful Default, there is the ſame Joy and Congruity between that, and Truth, as between the other and Light.

WE are all of us therefore, under that ſuperior and indiſpenſible Concern, of ſubmitting to greater Evidence of Reaſon and Duty; and where that clearer and plainer Manifeſtation offers itſelf, the Man is ſo far from being obliged in any Degree of Honour, or Conſtancy, ſtill to judge a Thing ſo, becauſe he heretofore judg'd it; ſtill to ſay, and maintain, by virtue of his having heretofore ſaid, and maintain'd it; that on the contrary, he is oblig'd in the Function of a Man, and Chriſtian, by all the Tyes of Honour, and of Reverence to Truth, to deſiſt, and change his Mind. A Change in that Circumſtance, ſince we are all liable to Miſinformation, and Inadvertency, and the greateſt and beſt have thought it their Honour (the Honour certainly that comes from GOD) to acknowledge it publickly, is ſo well ſecured from the Imputation of Shame, or Inconſtancy, that is is our only Conſtancy, our infallible Duty, our higheſt Credit.

TO govern ourſelves by other Sentiments, the greateſt Abſurdity, as well as Miſchief, is the wretched Conſequence. As to touch upon the *Abſurdity*: Becauſe a Change is ſometimes a Sign of Inconſtancy, therefore always; is juſt ſuch another Argument, as becauſe Delay, is the Counſel and effect of Prudence in

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* *Ars Cogit.*

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ſome Things, therefore in all: Whereas, there are ſeveral Things, and Caſes, (as Repentance, *&c.*) where Delay, is certain Folly. Juſt ſo, 'tis indubitable Folly, or Inconſtancy to Reaſon, not to change in ſome Caſes, where there is ſufficient Reaſon for it. To change for Reaſons of Truth, Duty, and Conſcience; is to be conſtant to *Truth*, *Duty*, and *Conſcience*, 'tis for certain the Honour that comes from GOD, our Praiſe, Sincerity, our Vertue. But to change for ſiniſter Ends, and unworthy Motives, is the *true*, ſcandalous, diſhonourable Inconſtancy, no better than Hypocricy and Iniquity. As ſteady a Thing as Righteouſneſs and Integrity ſeem to be, it admits of Change and Alteration from variety of Circumſtances, Neceſſity, and Providences: And as our Duty alters, 'tis but juſt and holy that our Reſolutions alter with it. *Jeremiah ſincerely deſired the Preſervation of the Kingdom of* Judah, *and the Liberty of his Country; but after* Zedekiah *had taken an Oath of Allegiance to the King of* Babylon, *it was his Buſineſs to adviſe* Zedekiah *and his People to yield* Jeruſalem *to him.* It appears then, that true Steadineſs, Honeſty, or Integrity, is conſiſtent in ſome Caſes, with a Change, and ſome Alteration with Conſtancy; that neither Steadineſs, nor Conſtancy, conſiſt in being reſolutely wedded to our Opinions, or impregnably determin'd never to flinch; but only in a fix'd Reſolution to follow the Dictates of Reaſon and Duty, never deviate from that, and ever comply with it, as ſoon as it clearly appears, and be always ſuſceptive of better Information, in order to come to the Certainty of it. There is a certain Light wherein a Picture always appears beſt; ſo, there are Views, wherein Truth will appear in its moſt captivating Charms; and by Way of Tryal, and Enquiry, 'tis good to hitch our ſelves, till we find it out; *Prove all Things, hold faſt that which is good.*

I hope, 'tis evident by this time, That Honeſty and Integrity, (other Words for Conſtancy) are far from being froward or inveterate, obſtinate or ſtubborn; but diſpoſed to alter our Opinions, and Conduct, as often as we ſee, or are informed, that plain Reaſon, or apparent Duty require it. To act and believe otherwiſe, is, in truth, to murder thoſe good

Names, proſtitute GOD and Truth, to our Will and Humour, to the Intereſt and Service of our Sect or Party; and transfer Conſtancy from Virtue and a good Conſcience, where it ſhould be, to the Errors of Opinions, Oppoſition and Reſentment of the other, where it ſhould not be.

THE important Truth, and neceſſary Duty, which ought to guide and govern us all, are Principles both plain, ſtable and certain. To them we owe a ſteadfaſt Adherence, not to variable Men, who take them up, and lay them down, follow or forſake; juſt as they happen to ſerve beſt a preſent Convenience. For Inſtance; The Love of our Country, of the Preſervation of its Pure Religion and Liberties, is a *firſt Principle*, and ſupremely plain; all the Precepts in Holy Scripture for Peace and Submiſſion to the *Powers that are*, are ſubordinate to that, and ſuppoſe it as neceſſarily, as that a Thing muſt be what it is, before it can be obeyed. We have all heard of the Time when this memorable Preſervation happen'd; only there are not a Few, who have Suſpicions as to the *Lawfulneſs*. And becauſe an *affirmative* Concluſion, as now, cannot follow from *two negative* Premiſes; and if any *Injury* was done, it was then done; and ſo long as there remains a Notion of *Right* and *Wrong*, there will remain a Notion of *Reſtitution*; that Matter may be fully elucidated in a very ſhort View, and in ſo clear a Point of Light, as to exhibite an abſolute Demonſtration of its Lawfulneſs *every Way*. The Thing to be demonſtrated, is, the *Divine*, and *Legal* Right of the Settlement after the *Revolution*, I take this Method for it: Whatſoever has a Right to Being, has a Right to the *Means* of Preſerving itſelf in Being; if then, our *Limited* Monarchy, and the *Reformation* of our Religion, are allowed to have a *Divine* and *Legal* Right, they have the *ſame* Divine, the *ſame* Legal Right to the Means of Preſerving themſelves. Now, if after the *Abdication* of K. *James*, and his embracing the *Romiſh* Religion, there was no other Means for preſerving the other two, but the enſuing *Settlement*; then, is that Settlement as Legal, and as much of Divine Right, as our Monarchy, or Refor-

Reformation. That there was no other Means in all the Methods of Human Prudence, and Proceedings of Divine Providence, is extreamly evident from hence, That their never was yet ſo much as one So-*Sovereign* Prince of the *Romiſh Faith*, in any one *Proteſtant* Country, ſince the Reformation, who did not proceed, according to Power and Opportunity, in Extirpating the Proteſtant Religion, as if in *Duty* indiſpenſibly bound to it. This is undeniably true in all the Hiſtory and Experience of *Proteſtant Europe*, If one ſingle Inſtance, upon the niceſt Search, could be alledged to the contrary, where it ſuffered no Diſturbance, we might allow it no good Concluſion; we might have ſome Reaſon to own, that we repreſent popiſh Princes, and our Dangers from them unfairly; but if not ſo much as one Inſtance to be produced, we may be exceeding certain we are not miſtaken in them, nor in the Meaſures of our Security againſt them. And whatever Danger has been, we may conclude ever will be; nay, we may be abſolutely certain, as long as *Popery* is what it is, annexing Honour and Salvation to the breaking, not to the keeping Promiſes with *us*, it never *can* be otherwiſe. That Settlement therefore muſt be, *Firſt*, As Legal as if expreſsly mention'd in the *Statute* Laws of our *Conſtitution*; becauſe grounded upon a Law ſuperior to all *written* Laws, PRESERVATION *non eſt Lex Scripta ſed nata.* (2) the *Common* Law of *England* expreſsly favours it, according to the celebrated *Bracton* (de conſuetud Angl.) Lex facit Regem, noneſt enim Rex, ubi dominatur Voluntas, & non Lex.* (3) 'Tis agreeable to the *Civil* Law, or Law of *Nations*, as *Grotius de Jur Belli & Pacis* has ſhewn. *Secondly*, as much of *Divine* Right, as if expreſsly ſet down in the Sacred Laws of *Holy Scripture*; becauſe, it is the expreſs Deſign of them to preſerve all Governments in their Rights and Immunities, and require Homage and Obedience to them ſo preſerved.

THE great End of the *Revolution*, was the Preſervation of the Proteſtant Religion, and to reſtore our

* Lib. I. c. 4. Sect. 13.

our invaded Conſtitution in Church and State. If it had not taken Place, all Things muſt have returned, with unrelenting Compulſion, to the ſame State we were in before the *Reformation*. But if that Reformation of Religion is *Lawful*, and of *Divine* Right, then alſo is the Means, for preſerving it of the ſame Character; and that Means is never to have a Prince; who is an *open Papiſt*. The Scripture of the *New Teſtament* by parity of Reaſon, requires it ſhould be ſuppoſed, and received, as a Thing of abſolute Neceſſity, that there be a Change of the Law, in that particular: For ſays the Author to the *Hebrews*. *There being a Change of the Prieſthood there muſt be of Neceſſity a Change alſo of the Law*. Nay, it is as good as actually provided for by the *Antient Law*, that excludes *Lunaticks*. Becauſe *Popery*, in reference to the Sound, Sober Chriſtianity we profeſs, is, indeed, as much a *Lunacy* in *Religion*, as the other can be in the *Blood*. And we are perfectly ſure moreover, that it renders a *King* of that *Perſwaſion* much fiercer and crueler to all Sheep that ſaperate from the Fold of *Popery*, than any other Lunacy could do; ſo devoutly raging, and zealouſly mad, that he is no more a *Shepherd*, but a very *Wolf*. A Change therefore being made in Separating from that Fold, there is a Neceſſity alſo of a *Change* of a Shepherd. No *Popiſh* Kingdom will allow of a *Proteſtant* Governor; they have not the Charity to truſt him, notwithſtanding no one Proteſtant Doctrine renders it incompatible or unproſperous; and is there any Charity, Senſe, or Prudence obliging a *Proteſtant* Dominion to *truſt* a *Popiſh* Ruler, when the very *Principles* of that Religion oblige, and conſtantly ſtimulate, to its Deſtruction. Before the *Reformation* the grand Law of Religion, (I mean that of deriving Religion from the *Holy Scriptures*) and the Laws of the Land, were in no Concert; but ſince, the Laws of pure Chriſtianity are *eſtabliſh'd* by the Law of the Land. And if there never was heard of a *written* Law to eſtabliſh the Laws *in general* (ſuch a Law being univerſally plain, neceſſary, and fundamental, no Body need be told of its Obligation

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and Authentickneſs) need there be one made, That the Wolf ought not, muſt not, be truſted to keep the Sheep? Did GOD or Man ever do ſo needleſs a Thing as to think of enacting or writing down ſuch a Law? Is it not therefore frivilous? Is it not the Spirit of Humour? of a croſs-grain'd Conſcience? an utter Miſtake? palpably Sophiſtical? to call in queſtion the Legal and Divine Right, of putting ſuch a Law in Practice? All Arguments againſt ſuch Experience, ſuch Legal and Divine Allowance, muſt ever more be ſophiſtical and unconcluding. Suppoſing, for I don't affirm, that the Church of *England* once held a contrary Tenet, from Her compoſing Her Loyal Directions, to *common* Intent, for the uſual, known, Courſe of Things, and never putting the extraordinary Caſe of *Ruin*, when the *Foundations are out of Courſe*; a Caſe, by the Way, She never ought to put; no *Law*, no *Homily*, nor any Thing, but Time, and Circumſtances, are fit to ſuggeſt that explicite Particular. The Divine Laws themſelves never ſpecify, yet allow of the *Neceſſity* which makes an explicite Exception in the current Obedience to them. They who will not allow the *Practice* of that Church, when Oppreſſed in ſo extraordinary a Manner, or aiding others in the like Circumſtances, to explain Her Meaning of the Doctrine ſufficiently; yet after a Caſe of ſuch Neceſſity, after ſo long an uninterrupted Experience, ever ſince the *Reformation*, of the Spirit of *Popery* when got into the Throne, which She could not have written, and determin'd, upon ſo much Experience, at the firſt; they muſt be oblig'd to grant, That if ever She held a contrary Opinion, She muſt of Neceſſity admit ſome change and alteration in it, now.

I HOPE, by this ſhort View, we are clearly apriz'd of, and agreed in, that firſt Principle of the Love of our Country, and its Preſervation. How throughly well were we once agreed in it? The *Revolution* was that National, Legal, and Divine, Standard of Preſervation, which *Tory* and *Wigg*, unanimouſly flock'd to, ſtriving to out-rival one another in Speed, and combining to be conſtant to it, as that which God, Law, and Nature all directed to; *Paſſive Obedience* and

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Non-reſiſtance, as then practiced by the *Tories*, when all was going to ruin; made excellent *Wiggs*, who pretend to no Releaſe from that Doctrine, but in ſuch a Caſe: Whoever therefore deſert thoſe Colours, deſert their own Principle, Choice, and Practice. Say, from whence? What Fountain-head, have all our Feuds and Diviſions proceeded? But the *Inconſtancy* of the *Tories*, and their Ingratitude for that Deliverance, their proving *Turn-Coats*, in great abundance, from their *invocated* Safety, from repeated *Oaths*, willingly taken. Are we then conſcious of any ſwerving from that noble *Britiſh* Principle, directly, or indirectly? whom we had a good Opinion of before, be they never ſo Noble, or Leading, we muſt in Conſcience relinquiſh it, and them: A greater Love muſt extinguiſh a leſs, when they are (as in the preſent Caſe) incompatible. We loved them once, becauſe we thought their Publick Spirit rightly affected towards the Houſe of *Hanover*, the ſole Refuge and only Support or Publick Good; but where-ever we know how much they have ſtrayed, or do ſtray, from that Principle and Duty, by Deed or Sentiment, in proportion to their changing and altering from that, are we oblig'd to quit and lay down our good Opinion of them: And whilſt we change Sides and forſake varying, or deceitful Men, we all the Time, are conſtant to the Principles of Truth, and Duty. But if we will keep up kind, and honourable Thoughts, and ſtill adhere to 'em in our Minds, by being conſtant to them, we grow unconſtant to our Principles; and by not changing and forſaking them, in lieu of the Character of Integrity, Steadineſs, and Conſtancy in a good Thing, we incur that of quitting, deſerting, and being aſhamed of it; and all for the miſerable Recompence of receiving a Pittance of falſe Honour from one another, and living in the Vogue of fictitious Conſtancy with ſome Acquaintance; not conſidering, that in the Mean Time, Reaſon and Scripture, the preſſing Obligations of Peace and Submiſſion, and ſpeaking no evil of Dignities, (all which we ought to be conſtant to) are in Force to condemn us, and are ſtriving to regain us to our Integrity, to prevent our Condemnation.

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IF this is the Groundwork of Tenaciouſneſs, *viz.* becauſe it was once held good and true, and I had a good Reaſon for thinking ſo, therefore it can never be otherwiſe, we may ſafely conclude it falſe and inſufficient; becauſe the true Inference is, when the Reaſons upon which my Opinion was built do change, my Sentiments ſhould change alſo; elſe my Notions are deſerted of Reaſon: If they were guilty, you become innocent by diſavowing their Tenets, but by defending, you are involved in the Artifices and Nets of their Guiltineſs and Slanders. Surely, it is a prodigious Inadvertency, to endure the partial Liking of ſome *leading* Friends to overcome ſo many weightier, ſo many certainer Obligations to the Love of our Country, of Peace and Quietneſs, of God, of one another. To deem it more Honourable to adhere to them, than to God or any other Duty, and at the ſame time overlook ſuch a ſwinging Miſtake and groſs Evil, argues a very ſtrange Eye-ſight; to be ſure, it proves Intellectuals diſuſed, or much abuſed. What is the Spirit of a bad Cauſe? or its Characteriſtick? if to reſign up our Judgment implicitely to the Guidance of thoſe we favour, againſt the notorious Evidence of Senſe and Experience, the common Reaſon of our Happineſs, the common Precepts of the Bible, is not.--- If this is Conſtancy, what, I beſeech you, is Perverſeneſs?--- Where? Whence comes the Honour of it? Did ever any King paſs a *Patent* to be immoveable and obſtinate in the wrong? Let it be the Infatuation! Enthuſiaſm! or any other Counterfeit, or ſome Frolick of Conſtancy! the *true* it never was, is, or can be. For can the Shame and Opprobrium of Conſtancy become its appendant Glory, or the Celebration of its Vertue? Who can ſhew a Licence to glory in his Shame, or think that praiſe-worthy which is criminal? Let me ever covet the Honour of being a *Turncoat* from Error and Faction--- If that is not the trueſt Meaſure of Honour, the Character of a Deſerter will ever be inglorious, tho' it is from a flagrant Error, or ſome grand Violation of Duty: Suppoſe the 40 Perſons who conſpired againſt St. *Paul* had impeach'd one of their Number of Inconſtancy, and being a ſad Renegado, for relenting and making a

Diſcovery, I ask whether he was not more conſtant than all the reſt, by timely changing and returning to that Duty, they raſhly and paſſionately departed from? So, in any other proportionable Inadvertency to common Duty, if we don't break looſe from that wicked Chain of Party, and the fallacious Reputation of Stedfaſtneſs, and grow more tender-hearted to Truth and Peaceableneſs, if we ſtill purpoſe to give up our ſelves to Oppoſition, and not the uniting Evictions of Truth, we had need be aware, leſt we add God and Truth alſo to the Number of our Enemies. " They are fa-
" ctious, (ſays the late Archbiſhop of *York*, in his ex-
" cellent Sermon) they are Setters up and Abetters of
" Parties, who endeavour to deſtroy, or unſettle, or
" diſparage, or in the leaſt hurt or weaken the Go-
" vernment and the Laws as they are eſtabliſh'd; let
" the *Principles* on which they go, or the Pretences
" they make, be what they will." To continue in the Party-Diſpoſition of flying off from the affectionate cementing Principles of Submiſſion and Contentment, and chuſe to hold out ſtill in that *Contumacia & Dedignatio Parendi Pliny* ſpeaks of, the Diſcord will grow ſo very ill-temper'd, that, if there could be two different Suns to rule the Day, two different Kings to govern the Land, two ſeveral Bibles, two ſeveral Gods, one would be choſen and approved of for no other Reaſon, but becauſe the oppoſite was by the other. But if we know but of one Sun, one Bible, one God, we ſhould be more cordially united in that *one King*, whom God and the Laws have ſet over us; and let the *Bible* of God exert its impartial and all-commanding Juriſdiction, by enforcing and demanding Submiſſion *to him, and all put in Authority under him*, adequately to the *Laws*, the ſettled Meaſure both of Obedience, and Authority. Good Subjects we never can be, whilſt we reſerve to pay that Allegiance to our *own Party*, which is only due to the *common Sovereign* over both; for it proves us more intent upon our own Profit than Duty, private, than publick Good. Let us advert to that fair Propoſal, of being as jealous of our own Ability to govern, as of theirs who do, and be perſuaded they ſee as far into Affairs, (not to ſay farther into the true Springs of the publick Cour-

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ſes) one Jealouſy would be a Cure for the other; once admit that *next to your Scheme and Meaſures of Policy thoſe of your Governors are the beſt, 'tis a decided Caſe, that they have the real Preheminence of Worth, on whom the ſecond Vote falls, in the Competition*: 'Tis hard to Rule well, but nothing eaſier than to Obey.

I have heard ſome aver, thoſe of one Denomination the beſt Subjects the King has: A noble Saying, I confeſs, and worthy of all Acceptation! But it only happens to want one Circumſtance, that is to ſay, Truth. For, unleſs an untowardly kind and favourable Sentiment for his Majeſty's *known* Enemies, and an odd unaccountable Coldneſs and Diſreliſh to the moſt zealous in his Service, and moſt ſerviceable in their Zeal; if Riot in ſome, Perjury in a good many, Strife, Envy, Bitterneſs, murmuring falſe things and ſpeaking evil ones, and ſuffering the *Diſſenters* to be more hearty and active in defending the Church of *England*, and in that the *Proteſtant* Religion, than themſelves, be the diſtinguiſhing Characteriſtick of one that vaunts himſelf for the *Church*, and the beſt Subject to *King GEORGE*, 'tis readily granted to be their due. But if none have the face to aſſert that Deſcription of either to themſelves, yet make it good in their Practice, I muſt hope, in a beſeeching Air, there is ſtill Room to grow better, and render the Agreement between the Name and the Carriage more tolerable. For really 'tis time to think of coming in for a Share of the good Duty of Paſſive-Obedience, as well as leave all the Vertue and Praiſe of it to their hated Adverſaries, whilſt they engroſs the empty Title.

IT is amply allow'd above, that Miſtake and Inadvertency are incident to otherwiſe great and good People: But then the Infirmity changes into a wilful Sin, when we have not the Vertue to own and forſake it, as ſoon as perceiv'd; to perſevere immoveably notwithſtanding, out of a ſham Pretence of Conſtancy, or other faulty Motives, is to be noted for Perverſeneſs and invincible Stubborneſs; and *Stubborneſs*, we have read, is as odious to God *as Iniquity and Idolatry*, 1 Sam. 15. 23. If any could with Truth alledge they are abſolutely *married* to their Opinion, they might with greater Patience bear the Inconveniencies they have

brought themſelves under, rather than acknowledge the Error of their Choice; as 'tis very uſual with thoſe who have thrown away themſelves in Marriage againſt the Advice of their Friends, to put the beſt Face upon the Matter, after they found themſelves deceived, ſooner than confeſs the wrong Judgment they made. But to what Purpoſe ſhould any of us remain wedded to our own Trouble and Miſtake, Sin, and Vexation? when we may be ſo honourably divorced; (Could one ſingle *D. D.* poſſibly marry ſo many?) The Divorce is as chaſte and vertuous as between a Sinner and his Sin; Conſcience, Intereſt, Happineſs, all approve of it, all require it, they all wonder you live ſo long together. What makes Hereſy ſo bad a thing as it is, but *Pertinacy?* As when conſiderable Error refuſes to be ſubdued by ſufficient clear Light, or demonſtrative Divine Authority, continuing to ſtrengthen and confirm it ſelf thro' Obſtinacy and exceſſive Fondneſs, or other baſe Reaſons, the *Innocency* of Error vaniſhes away, and the *Guiltineſs* of it remains. The Fault paſſes from the Underſtanding to the *Will*, where it entrenches it ſelf, like a ſtubborn Offender who ſcorns to yield, reſolves upon a deſperate Defence, knowing that Fortreſs to be inexpugnable.

WHAT Excuſe or Extenuation then have they to juſtify and ſupport themſelves for continuing ſtill in a detected Inadvertency? Not the ſuppoſed Reputation of Steddineſs; that is wholly taken from them; they can't ſo much as once more defend themſelves behind that Wall, it is levell'd to the Ground: the ſtrong Hold is blown up; if that has been the main *Body of Reſerve*, 'tis utterly put to flight.

PERHAPS there are other concurring Cauſes helping to ſeduce and conſtrain to this faulty Tenaciouſneſs. Let us go on to take an imparrial View of all that can be imagin'd to influence any Numbers, and ſhew their Inſufficiency, to their Satisfaction.

Secondly It is not defenſible in any to ſay I have been long in that Mind, therefore determine to continue in it. It puts in mind, what an Emperor of *Morocco* ſaid to an *Engliſh* Ambaſſador, after he had been inform'd by him of the Chriſtian Religion and read the Scriptures, 'That truly, if he would change for any Religion

'gion it ſhould certainly be for that, but he was not to 'think of departing from what he had been long uſed 'to.' We are all of us kind of Emperors in our Minds in this reſpect; but methinks 'tis Heatheniſh in a Chriſtian to intend ſuch an Anſwer, as only ſerves to detain him in a wilful Oppoſition to preponderating Truth. Suppoſing 20 ſeveral Religions, and but one of them in the Right, this will be equally good to hold 19 in Error, for one in the Truth: each had that Argument on his Side, it was the Perſwaſion of his Country, Friends, he was either Educated in it, or long Accuſtomed to it. This would as ſoon juſtify a *Turk* as a *T---* therefore no more to be mentioned on their behalf. I hope they won't offer to juſtify themſelves.

Thirdly, From Opiniatry or Self-conceit, wherein ſome are wiſer *than ſeven Men who can render a Reaſon*: That would be juſtifying one Fault by another; nor can they.

Fourthly, From having Mens Perſons and Judgments in Admiration. For when that is in repugnancy to to a Man's Duty plainly ſpecified in Scripture, this Rule alone without that ſuperior Meaſure and Regulator, will ſometimes lead him to the Wrong, as well as the Right. He ought not to err purpoſely with any Body, tho' it was a *Plato*; *Magis amica Veritas*. If one or more leading Men in the *Senate*, *County*, *Neighbourhood*, or *Club* we belong to, is of ſufficient Authority to hearten and confirm a Man ſtill that he is in the Right, againſt Experience and Matter of Fact, which uſed formerly to decide all Doubts, againſt the moſt evident Scripture moreover, which ought always to controul the Underſtanding and the Concience, he has made a fine Complement indeed of them both; thus to reſign them up implicitely, and with them his Liberty of Reaſoning, and his Senſes alſo, to the Champions, and Company, he has choſen to call *Honeſt*. Obſerve ſome of theſe Leaders very angry and of a flaming Zeal and Aſſurance in their Sphere, and you ſee greater or leſſer Circles of People kept from cooling to the Temper of Conſidering as they ought; what ſhall we call this ſiding with Men in Contradiction to God? --- God bids you ſpeak no evil of Dignities, to lead quiet and peaceable Lives; but others lead you

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to the reverſe, and ſhew you how to be intractable to thoſe whom God has given Authority over us, to ſpread falſe Jealouſy againſt them; how to diſquiet your Lives in vain, to hate thoſe that differ from them as tho' they were their Enemies, traduce and injure by all Means in their Power; theſe are the Men we aprove of, and prefer to be govern'd by: Behold your Choice! A ſtrange Option indeed! Where a Man muſt be accounted of no Principles, if he don't receive the currant Lies and Reflections from one another without ever heſitating at the Credibility, once ſuſpecting the Contrivance; or dares be ſo independent as to credit his one Eyes or Ears before them, or ſuch a Changeling, to believe one Word the other Party ſays, though inwardly ſatisfied of the Truth of it, but like an Apprentice fears to open his Mouth, if it makes againſt his Maſters. If in ſome Caſes, the Impoſſibility of the Aſperſion or Suſpicion being true, in others point blank Proof to the contrary, and in others the higheſt Improbability, are not ſufficient to ſhame the Party Spirit into Silence, it is incapable of receiving reaſonable Satisfaction: neither ought they to think of juſtifying themſelves.

Fifthly, From meer Numbers bearing Company; becauſe, we know the Diſſwaſive from *following a Multitude to do evil*. By that Argument a wicked Man need never Repent, ſeeing he has enough to keep him in Countenance. Unleſs Numbers could change Truth into Falſhood, or Sin into Duty, they are equally incompetent to vindicate, as for the Weakeſt to direct the Wiſeſt.

Sixthly, I have heard ſome excuſe themſelves by the Lamentation that this Nation is always a divided Nation! Which is ſuch another Argument, as becauſe the Word of Truth ſays, *it muſt needs be that Offences come*, he will therefore be one, who ſhall fulfil it; forgetting what he ſhould moſt of all remember, *viz.* the *Woe* denounc'd *againſt him by whom the Offence cometh*.

Seventhly, Others would fain extenuate the Matter by *Doubting*; but Doubting in ſo plain a Caſe is incapable of aſſiſting them. Of Doubts ſome are dangerous, ſome ſafe; to doubt of the Matters of Fact, and the things we ſhould live by, is an odd affected ſort of Heſitation. Say they, there are *Divines* and *Learned* Men

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of each Opinion, and Books writ on both ſides, what ſhould I do therefore? I will tell you what not only you ſhould, but *muſt* do; 'tis as impartial Advice as any in the World, *viz.* That you judge for yourſelf. You will reply by what Rule? By the beſt in the World; that is, plain Scripture and plain Reaſon: wherein you may be ſtrong and experienced as the mightieſt Diſputant, and diſtinguiſh between Sollidity and Shew, Words and Senſe, Duty and Doubtfulneſs: the obvious Laws of Obedience, and difference between Good and Evil are the familiar Principles, given to all plain and honeſt Minds, to judge of the Doctrines and Opinions that concern *their* Sphere, and govern themſelves accordingly. But the Sun itſelf don't ſhine brighter at Mid-day, (no Cloud in the Sky) than the clear deciding Obligations, in the *Old* and *New Teſtament* for obeying Governours, and thoſe Authorized by them. If the Cloud of Paſſion and Prejudice did not intercept, 'tis impoſſible but they muſt be ſeen and ſubmitted to. At the ſame time it is moſt apparent unto all Men, what *Divines* have been, or are, moſt in the Right; they, who know their Obligations to Holy Scripture, our Church, and their Oaths, yet inconſiſtently to them all, inſinuate Scruples and Diſſatisfactions againſt them; or like others, ſupinely ſilent in removing them, tho' they had the Remedy at their Tongue's end: a Token which the *Adverſary* rejoiced in, and conſtrued to their Favour *; or thoſe other, who are mindful of all thoſe *Ties*, faithfully inculcate a moſt conſcientious Quietneſs and Submiſſion, when, and where, Diſcontents and Animoſities endanger the Salvation of Souls, and the Peace of the Realm; and ſo exemplify how perfectly a good Church-man and a good Subject may conſiſt together; and contribute to preſerve the Honour of their Function, and blunt the Reproach of enſlaving and abſurd Politicks.

Some may be for defending themſelves from owning their Miſtake, by the Help of that Maxim of the Law of Nature, *Nemo tenetur accuſare ſeipſum*, no one is ob-

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* Vide *W.* Lord Biſhop of E L Y's moving *Charge to his Clergy*, 1716.

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liged to accuſe himſelf. But that can have no manner of Application here; it holds good only where any great Loſs or probable Damage may accrue to the Party confeſſing; but in the preſent Caſe, he can aſſign no real Inconvenience, he is ſecured of additional Honours and Commendations, ſure of performing a noble Act of Reaſon and Religion, in doing that *Honour to the Truth*, that the *Truth will honour him*, and *they who deſpiſe it ſhall be lightly eſteemed.* From the Inſtant of his ſubmitting to it, *it makes him free*, Maſter of himſelf, a Friend and Favourite of God.

THE long Indiſpoſition of Prejudice is a general Obſtacle to what I have been recommending. Conviction would as certainly follow from Evidence, as Light and Sight from the Sun, if ſomething did not unfortunately intercept: The Habit of contradicting, ſuſpecting, and disbelieving one another, prodigiouſly diſtorts the right Apprehenſion of Things, as a groſſer Medium reflects that crooked which is ſtreight. Thus a ſlight Shew of Probability, ſeconded by a ſtrong prejudicate Opinion, has a greater Power upon the Mind, than the cleareſt Demonſtration againſt it. Still if the Evidence is ſufficient to over-ballance, and rectify the Underſtanding from the inherent Partiality, the Man is anſwerable for not framing his Inferences and his Actions accordingly. For, if thoſe Prejudices are the Premiſes he argues from, whoever chuſes the Premiſes chuſes the Concluſion; which muſt be Error and Miſtake. 'Tis in vain to ſay, he does not chuſe the laſt, as ſuch, if he does not refuſe and forbear what neceſſarily leads to and keeps him therein; if the Cauſes are wilful, the Effects and Conſequences are wilfully wicked. A World of Pains is requiſite to convince one who is but half-reſolv'd againſt it; but nothing can ſatisfy thoſe, who have taken up an *entire* Purpoſe not to be convinc'd: Arguments can do no more than perſuade, but the ſullen Reſolve renders the Mind imperſuaſible, impregnable. Not the beſt Reaſons the thing is capable of, no Argument humane, or divine, can operate, till that reſolute Diſpoſition of never examining whether in the wrong or not, begins to give, and grow a little more complaiſant to Truth; the ſtrongeſt Proof in the World will have no better

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Reception or Succeſs, than the weakeſt; becauſe ſo far from being reflected on as a Reaſon, or Diſcovery of Truth, weak or ſtrong, that it is not canvaſs'd or conſider'd at all. Miracles are unable to force their Way through affected Prejudices, or gain Admiſſion to the moſt important and beneficial Admonitions. What more kept up the Oppoſition againſt our *Saviour*, than a prejudicate Notion of the *Meſſiah's* coming as a *Temporal* Prince to free them from the *Roman* Yoke? This Notion they erroneouſly gather'd out of *Scripture*, of the *Divine* Right of his *Kingſhip*; and having once imbib'd that Poiſon and Deluſion, would unalterably cleave to it, let God or Man bring what Ruin they pleaſed for it; freely chuſing to be undone, rather than yield themſelves in the wrong. St. *Peter* tells them, that through Ignorance they did it, but he would not endure them to think that ſufficient to excuſe them; for he charges them in ſolemn Earneſtneſs to repent of ſo great a Sin. And in *Luke* 4. 16, *&c.* we find a ſtrong Prejudice in thoſe of *Nazareth* (where our Lord was brought up and reſided longeſt) againſt him, as being *Joſeph's* Son, an Underling, mean Perſon; he there arraigns them of that Injuſtice againſt him, and themſelves, the not eſteeming a Prophet enough in his own Country, by two remarkable Inſtances of Detriment from it; one of *Elias*, who in the Famine of above 3 Years, was not ſent by God to any of the diſtreſſed Widows of his *own* Country *Iſrael*, but to a Widow of *Sarepta* in another Country; and another of *Eliſha*, who cured a foreign Lord in *Aſſyria* of his Leproſy, when there were many Lepers in *Iſrael*, who would not deſire a Cure of him.

NOTHING can be truer, than that the Validity of a prior Judgment or anticipated Deciſion, by which we immediately judge every thing right that agrees with that, or amiſs that diſagrees, can be no better than the Grounds that *Prejudice* is built upon; and if that therefore ſhould be an unequal or undue Standard, it muſt be evident, we try all things by falſe Weights and Meaſures; and ſtill to judge and eſteem by that, excluſive of better Information proffering it ſelf and proteſting againſt it, muſt be the great *Iniquity* of judging. We are to go-

vern our ſelves by the Laws of God, and not the Notions of Men, which would *make them of none effect*; one is diſputed, the other unqueſtionably plain and obvious: If we then give Credit to Opinions which deſtroy and vacate the Obligation of the former, our credulous Prejudice will neither excuſe from Sin, nor reſcue from Damnation. With regard to Sentiments of *Perſons*, the Prejudiced have ſo vehement a Deſire and Intereſt that ill things ſhould be true, 'tis no wonder that Deſire begets a Suſpicion, and that Suſpicion an Aſſurance in many, that they are true. The Tranſition between a Facility to believe and actual Deception, is not more common, than it is imperceptible; and it will ever be eaſy for the Artifices of Deceivers to miſlead, and difficult on the other hand to recover Subjects, ſo long as the Party-Prejudice retains an uſurping Power of believing whatever is pleaſing and agreeable to it ſelf: ſuppoſe any wicked enough to invent vile Aſperſions, and moſt uncharitable Improbabilities, there will be enough weak and unthinking Retailers of that vicious Gratification; nor can there be any Remedy, or Hope, of its being otherwiſe, till they recal their Minds to the Ways of Thinking, and of having greater Regard to Truth apparent, than Party; to ask and ſtay for Proof, and ſuſpect every prejudicial Hearſay without it; fairly letting Experience have more Weight than Railing; and ſo eſcape the Wiſe Man's Imputation, *He that believeth every Word is ſimple.* Is the *King's Majeſty* and his *Miniſtry* inferior in Authority to one of your ſelves, that they meet with ſo much worſe Treatment? Do you hold it unjuſt to believe every thing of theſe, till you have examin'd the Grounds? Let the former but have the ſame common Juſtice and fair Play----- They have a Right to demand it, as much as to live: their Title to it is ſacred; the Payment on our Part indiſpenſible. Whilſt the contrary Cenſures is Arrogance in private Perſons, noxious to our ſelves and others, *earthly, deviliſh*; a deviliſh Departure from Civility, as well as Chriſtianity. Tho' 'tis more diſreſpectful to aggravate their Failings than others, they will forgive the Diſreſpect, upon Condition, you can ſhew your ſelves not miſtaken and impoſed upon in your Imputations a-

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gainſt them. Governours can no more be exempt from all Failings than private Subjects; but examine and ſearch diligently into their publick Vertues, (the Qualities which make us all ſafe and happy) and there will be little need of Candor for concealing or extenuating what is found amiſs; nor is there any peculiar Occaſion for it, upon other Accounts.

IN ſecuring ſo eſſential a Bleſſing as the *Proteſtant Succeſſion*, we might well been contented to hoped, or enjoy'd leſs Princely Endowments in the next *Proteſtant* Heir; but when they are illuſtriouſly firm and regular, awful, yet engaging, in the Exerciſe; ſince Experience exceeds the Fame, which had been ſcann'd too for 15 Years before by the Diſaffected, the World abroad admiring, almoſt reverencing his Excellencies, and his Enemies not refuſing him that Juſtice in the Height of their Anger; it is the more ſingular Infamy in any Subjects to grow evil becauſe he is ſo very good. Are they provoked moſt at his Vertues? or at viewing the firm Syſtem of ſo many Bleſſings, and the laſting Fabrick of National Happineſs built, as at preſent, upon ſtrong, beautiful, numerous Pillars?

THERE are but two things can raiſe the Foundation of Murmuring, either a real Cauſe of Complaint, as Miſgovernment, Violation of Laws, or elſe ſome Artifice or other in blowing up Diſcontents; the Impoſture of falſe Inſinuations and vile Slander is the concerted ſupply of the firſt, and deſigning Men are but too expert in the management, for encreaſing the Number of Diſcontents: Some ſupinely believe, as they do any thing elſe that is told them; ſome ſpitefully, ſuborn'd by Party Oppoſition; ſome gratify their Reſentment; ſome their Envy; ſome their Intereſt; and projected Scheme of Strength and Power encreaſing; others to cover their Guilt, *iram atque animos a crimine ſumunt*; others to ſerve the Popiſh Religion: Now, if the former real Cauſe of Murmur can't be ſhewn, it remains, that it muſt be upheld by theſe wicked Wiles and Artifices, and that ill-deſigning Men cheriſh and nurſe up Faction and Diſquietude among thoſe, who ſtill give up their Underſtanding to them, for no better Reaſon but becauſe they uſed to do ſo; how eaſy is it to infuſe their own angry

Paſſions and Prejudices? and by their Example and Aſperſions prevail to bear them Company in the Guilt and Irreligion of diſobeying Governours, and be jealous and uneaſy becauſe the other won't be contented to be happy, till their Ambition, Envy or Revenge are contented. The Manner of Spirit they are of, from inſtructed Prejudice, makes them eaſy and willing to be impoſed on, and proffers it ſelf to be workt up into Paſſion for nothing; thus wretchedly are they enticed out of their Duty and Quiet, and Regard to Truth. *To the Pure all things are pure, but to the Defiled* (with Prejudice) *is nothing pure.* They reflect not on the cuſtomary Deluſion and Unrighteouſneſs of inferring from a Particular to a General, *i. e.* becauſe a few held ſuch Opinion, therefore all; other few did ſo once, therefore always; they give Credit to one Sect or Party, therefore believe them implicitely in all things; have withdrawn their Credit from another, therefore believe them in nothing, how true and undeniable ſoever---- The Power of a common Proverb or *Nickname* has been able to bar out the moſt penetrating Conviction. *Can any good thing come out of Galilee?* defy'd all that our Saviour could do--- So, the *W*---- are *Republicans, Enemies to the Church,* tho' continually diſavowed and diſdain'd by them, and no Proof given of it ſince the Commencement of that Name, under King *Charles* II. All the Evidence lying in the Speculation of gain-ſaying People. And if they will ſtill perſiſt in the Calumny, they are unavoidably *ſelf-condemned, falſe Accuſers of the Brethren*; wrong their own Faculties, and belye a long Series of Experience. To fret and vex becauſe the Adminiſtration of Affairs is not amiſs, that they may be able to juſtify their unſupported Jealouſies and Murmurs, is to act the Part of Traitors to the Publick, and wiſh it Injury, in order to countenance their Accuſations. Can wiſhing a Man *may* prove a Knave ever juſtify their calling him one? If their artificial Slander and Jealouſy have their Foundation in time to come, 'tis a plain Confeſſion there is nothing at preſent to ſupport their Pretences, and clear Demonſtration, that they who are ſo deſirous to find an Occaſion againſt them, can find none. 'Tis as eaſy for the

Spiteful to ſurmiſe any Improbability for the time to come, as to wiſh ill: but when they are reduced to their *may be* to carry on the Indictment, it muſt end in an *Ignoramus*; it *may not be* is the fitteſt Confutation. To draw *Chimeras* out of their preſent State of Non-exiſtence to ſerve a preſent Reſentment, and palm them for Realities, is hateful Juggling, groſs Impoſture, and a perpetual Source of Animoſity and Miſunderſtanding. It is the common Trick of Impoſtors for covering Colluſion the better, to cry out to the People, *beware of Cheats*,—of no Friends to *Monarchy*, and *Epiſcopacy*, whilſt they are ſlighly beguiling them into Meaſures inevitably deſtructive of *Proteſtant* Epiſcopacy, and *limited* Monarchy. And as the Managers know in their Conſcience, they have made Lies their Refuge, there is a laudable Way to be even with them, *viz.* by deceiving the Deceivers, and diſappointing them of the Credit they depend upon. Let the judging Faculties of their Followers be their own ſo long, as to require Proof, the Cheat would out, and their Loyalty, and Content all come right; Make the Experiment of withdrawing Deference, weigh light Surmiſes againſt notorious Facts, all the great and material things which the *W*—— have ſuggeſted of the *T*—— have proved true in Fact, and what theſe have ſurmiſed of the other, as conſtantly falſe, this is a fair Appeal and clear Trial, and of ſo many Years Evidence, (not to mention how the late *Rebellion* has drawn the Curtain of concealed Treaſon, and ſhewn the Actors and Prompters) it ought to rectify every wrong Judgment, convince them of Impoſition, and entirely diſſipate Prejudice and Diſunion. Admit this equitable Meaſure and Hope of Reconcilement, how many Mens Hearts would ſmite them for entertaining Reproaches? which they were never able, tho' challeng'd ſo oft, to make any Proof of, when it was ſo very grateful and ſerviceable to have them made good; to inſtance,

THE pious Fraud of the Danger of the *Church*, that grand Seminary of Fears and Jealouſy; the Directors of Faction would be bankrupt in Scandal, if they had not recourſe hither: but what Token or Proof, I beſeech you, can they exhibit of it, or reſemblance

of

of a Houſe falling * ? Unleſs it is the building of new Churches, and well endowing them, and all other wiſe Care and Governance ſince the *Revolution* †. Can they point out ſo much as one Act or Meaſure of State prejudicial of her Welfare, or a ſingle evidence of Injury or Diſfavour, or Alteration in her Laws, or Revenues? *Nemo repente fit turpiſſimus*, impoſſible to be the greateſt Enemies to her before it can be ſhewn they have done one Act of Diſkindneſs. If all the Allegations of Danger and Inſecurity for ſo long a time have continually been found a deſigned Abuſe, void of all pretences to Truth, what Reaſon has any Man of common Senſe, but to conclude the preſent of the ſame Kind? Never was Credulity Parent of a more frivolous Fear. What a more fictious or prepoſterous Jealouſy, than to run on headſtrong in ſounding a falſe Alarm for ſo many Years together? making themſelves and others miſerable and uneaſy, in the vain Imagination; when nothing is certainer thro' all that time, than, in the Scheme of thoſe who foment thoſe Suggeſtions, the only Anſwer to the Queſtion when the Church is ſafeſt, is when *Popery* is in the faireſt way to be re-eſtabliſht, conſidering who is loudeſt in the Remonſtrance, and the leſs Hopes of that, the more confidently the other has been talkt into Jeopardy, the lowder, at times, the Cry: Have not the *Papiſts* always joined their Subtlety, and uſed their utmoſt Efforts in this continued Stratagem? 'Tis not a parcel of deſigning or diſguſted Subjects crying out Help, Help— *i. e.* We are undone if you don't, good People, believe our ſtory and befriend us with your Credulity and Diſcontent, that carries with it the Proof of Diſtreſs or Danger, no more than one crying Fire in the Street, yet can't make out where it ſmokes: the Cry will amaze and raiſe the Palpitation of Heart, a little while, but the Amazement, as ſoon as no Danger can be ſhewn, turns upon the Cryers, and excites Indignation at the feigned Fear; ſo let it, ſo ought the Anger to be ſpent in the other Caſe, when all the world

* *Vide* Dr. *Hole*'s Serm. *Act-Sund.* at *Oxford*, 1716.

† *Vide* Bp. of ELY's Thankſgiving-Sermon, 1716. 11th Edition. Who more proper to bear Teſtimony, than ſuch an experienc'd, diſcerning, pious *Prelate*?

knows

knows *Non apparere & non eſſe idem eſt*, none need be ignorant unleſs they pleaſe, that all the bruited Fears and Jealouſies are actually compounded out of diſappointed Ambition, and other Malignant Ingredients; take theſe away, that is gone. In a Matter of ſo great Contumely and ſuſpected Deſign, the Reporters are very ſimple if they expect to be believed out of Courteſy and Civility, according to the *Italian* Complaiſance *il creder e di Corteſia*, but from ſome appearance of Evidence; to be without Teſtimony in a Caſe of *Fact*, and ſo open to Proof, is to be without Reaſon, and conſequently can be guilty of no leſs than a *railing Accuſation*.

'TILL ſome evidence of that ſort is offered, Clamours to the contrary prove nothing but a diſappointment of their own Wiſhes of finding ſome Occaſion againſt them upon that Article; it will abundantly ſatisfy the World, that the Word *Church* is worn as a Cloak of Maliciouſneſs and baſe Purpoſes, to cover the poverty of Chriſtianity, in as many, as make a ridiculous Profeſſion and Noiſe of believing in the Church, before they give any real ſign of believing in *God*, or *Chriſt*; by impious Perjury, by ridiculing the Spirit of Moderation, Meekneſs, Quietneſs and Chriſtianity; by others, the refuſe of the People. The deſigning Men, thoſe *Church-Magicians*, know two things very well, that the Multitude who are well meaning, are not the moſt diſcerning, eaſy to be impoſed on by well ſuited Artifices; the other they make Advantage of, is the Fondneſs for the *eſtabliſhd* Church; nothing has a nearer Approach to their Paſſions than a Concern for that, the very Colour of a Colour of Danger there, is enough to alarm their Imagination, pervert and deprive them of the Power of judging ſoberly: they find their Account in this, and therefore, when they want the Subſtance, dreſs up the Shadow, and ſet the Phantome a ſtalking about the Kingdom, to fright and do Feats among the People.--- The Fallacy, all the time, conſiſting in this; they have combined together to ſirname themſelves the *Church*, and till they flouriſh and are received into Royal Favour, it can never proſper, nor the Nation be wholly free from the Impertinence of its Danger--- But all Arguments muſt vaniſh before Matter of Fact

to

to the contrary, and be accuſed of Falacy and Lying; has not every beneficial Act for her Proſperity, ſince the *Revolution*, been adviſed, carried on, and accompliſh'd by thoſe, whom they would abuſe all the World in calling *no Friends* to her? and by the impudent Aſperſion both contradict their own Conſciences, and other Peoples Senſes.— I never heard of any Exception to the contrary, except the uſeleſs *Schiſm* Bill; nor any Interruption to Proofs of inviolable Friendſhip, for almoſt 30 Years ſtanding. The ſuppoſed Danger from Immorality, Deiſm, Socinianiſm, *&c.* is common to the Church of Chriſt in general, to every National Church, and not more peculiar to ours than others.

WHEN a falſe Accuſation is brought againſt any, there can be no ſurer Confutation, than to ſhew them uncapable of committing the Thing. (1.) As to the *King*, it has been obſerved, that his Principles (being originally *Lutheran*) ſets him at a greater diſtance from favouring *Calviniſts*, i. e. in other Words, the *Diſſenters* in this Nation, than if he had been Home-born in the Communion of the Church of *England*. The *Pretender* well knew his own deſtructive and irreconcileable Principles, and the little Credit to be given to his Promiſes to the contrary; he was ſo fair in his *Declaration* as not in plain Words to ſtipulate one for her Protection; a very ingenuous Bite, I confeſs, to draw Folks into a good Opinion of him, from his great Sincerity in telling them he can't be their Friend. (2.) 'Tis equally impoſſible for the Glorious *Miniſtry* under *King GEORGE* to be guilty of the Accuſation, becauſe the Safety of the Church is an implicated and eternal Reaſon of State, that ſettles her perpetual Stability; let who will be uncharitable to diveſt them of a ſincere Inclination, Malice it ſelf can't refuſe them the Reputation of a tranſcending Genius in the other: No, they love their *Royal* Maſter too ſincerely, to adviſe him, at any time, to break his *Oath*, or impair one of the main Pillars of his Throne. Beſides, who can doubt his Majeſty's certain and peculiar Care of the Church at Home? (to which he has ſolemnly obliged himſelf) when we ſee ſo indulgent a Specimen of it, in retrieving from Ruin a *Copy* of the Church

of

of *England* abroad, *viz.* the Proteſtant Epiſcopal Churches in *Great Poland* and *Poliſh Pruſſia* *; when under no Tie to recommend and promote their Intereſt, but that of his Love and Kindneſs to thoſe Churches, as being a *Relation* to ours.

(3.) 'Tis morally impoſſible for the *Diſſenters* to prevail over the *eſtabliſh'd* Church, conſequently no Apprehenſion of Danger can ever be verified from that Quarter. They are in no poſſibility of prevailing either by Force, or by Argument; never by the *former*, becauſe at Home they are diſconcerted, and but few when conjoined together, in Compariſon of the Members of the Church; and from Abroad they can hope for no Aſſiſtance, like the *Papiſts*, being *Aliens*, condemned by all the World for their Separation; as for their *Arguments*, there is ſtill leſs Fear, being confuted in Meekneſs, and moſt ſtrenuouſly routed by *W--- Divines*. If theſe, among others, are eſſential and irrefragable Reaſons, for Satisfaction, yea for general Confidence in this Point, where's the Provocation? the Grounds of Anger? of Murmur? of Diſtruſt? Where the Refuge of not owning a Miſtake and Inadvertency in this Caſe alſo?

Eleventhly, I can think but of one Pretext more, *viz.* the Excluſion, for the preſent, of ſome out of Truſt and Favour. A ſore Grievance! But I would placidly ask, whether it was not their own Conduct brought it upon them? If it was, their own Conduct may alſo remove it. An Alteration in that would gradually affect an Alteration in the other; as ſoon as they put off Chagrine, and put on more Temper, and Moderation of Envy, think it their Duty, Intereſt at leaſt, to ſhew themſelves Subjects equally deſerving with others, in Capacity, Quietneſs, *active* Loyalty, from this Day forward, they will not fail of their Deſervings, in due time, if they faint not. But is it not a ſtrange Method of clearing a doubted Integrity, to be guilty of an After-management, which inſtead of removing, di-

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* *Vide* The KING's Brief, bearing Date *March* 23. ſecond Year of his Reign, and the *Archbiſhop* and *Biſhops* Circular Letters, &c.

rectly ſerves to confirm former Suſpicions? Every body ſurely had, and now has, the Opportunity to ſhew, *as to one*, the Suſpicion has been groundleſs; but to neglect that Opportunity always, is as if Railing to a Man's Face was the ſureſt Way to convince him, of never diſaffecting him behind his Back. If they won't yet, yet, ſever themſelves from the Guilty, and the Suſpected, by making a publick Draw-back of the good Opinion they uſed to export to them, who can judge them entirely innocent? Can a King, a Foreigner, be blamed, if they never yet vouchſafed to do any thing to convince him ſufficiently he has been miſtaken in them? When the Prodigal Son is *returned*, 'tis time enough to kill the fatted Calf, be merry, put on Robes and Ring; whilſt the other Son, who was always dutiful, and never tranſgreſſed his Father's Will, nor acted againſt his Intereſt, will nevertheleſs be entitled to that Praiſe and Reward, *Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.* Before the other can be equall'd, or come in for a Part, he muſt *return, confeſs* his Error, and be ſtudious of redeeming what he has done amiſs, by the Zeal and Eminency of his After-carriage.

THE great Weakneſs and Inexcuſeableneſs of the Diſatisfaction, under Conſideration, tho' the Flower of their Pretences, will be more apparent from the following Reflections. (1.) How few in compaſſion are really intereſted and affected in that Complaint? (2.) If they will be generous enough to acknowledge this, (ſhame muſt hinder from refuſing) *viz.* That they are, upon the whole, acted more by *publick* Spirit, than private Views and Intereſt. Do they hold indeed to that Declaration? Then ought they to be indifferent who are the Inſtruments of publick Service; but if concerned and out of Humour, that that they are not employed, and diſlike the publick Happineſs meerly becauſe they don't like the Hands they receive it from, they plainly prefer the Inſtruments before the End, and themſelves to the publick Good, and ſo are inconſiſtent with their Pretences; the Diſcontents are the Actions of inſincere, ſelfiſh Subjects, the Declaration of ſincere honeſt, quiet ones. (3.) If they will ſhew the publick Intereſt to be out

of

of Courſe, there will be Reaſon to hear their Complaint, that they alſo may have a Hand in the Profit and Honour of adminiſtring better. (4.) Suppoſe a Maſter of a Houſe has but *ſix* Places, and *eleven* Competitors, whoever gives Favours, when there is an Impoſſibility of giving to all, makes choice of his faithful Friends; if *five* muſt go without, and ſome be diſpleaſed, and the Queſtion who? 'Tis ſoon reſolved. (5.) If this is the chief Ground of Oppoſition, and Ill-will, to thoſe in Authority, as who in his Heart does not know it? We have got an obvious ſure Teſt to diſcover the Impoſition, and diſtinguiſh whether the Clamours of Men proceed from the Conſcience of anothers Right, the Faults in governing, or their own Want of Power and Authority. Do the *T*--- generally confeſs, that all Things had remain'd quiet, if the King had taken *them* into the Miniſtry, all had been ſafe, right, juſt, and good? All who profeſs this Principle of Animoſity, effectually define themſelves actuated by Baſeneſs and Sordidneſs, and that they have no *real* Concern for Truth, Conſcience, or the Duty of a Subject; the Profeſſion undoes them and their Cauſe with all conſiderate People. But they are for the ſhorteſt Cut to Ruin, whom Diſappointment and Spite have purely inſtigated to turn their Thoughts to be more ſatisfied about the *Pretender's* Right, than before. 'Tis juſt as if ſo many Folks were reſolving to throw away what they had already, becauſe they have not more; and rather than be balk'd of what they ſet their Minds on, ſupinely diſlike not thoſe Meaſures, which muſt infallibly deſtroy their preſent Enjoyments, as well as their Hopes; before they conſent, any ſhould exceed them in Poſts and Preferment, chuſe to equal themſelves in Miſery with them; and ſooner than not get a Victory over an Adverſary or Rival, be free to bury themſelves in the ſame Grave --- As to *Nonjurors* pretending Conſcience for their Diſloyalty to his preſent Majeſty, there is this Teſt of Diſcrimination. If they ſincerely refuſe to take the Oaths out of *Conſcience* and Fear of *Damnation*, that Principle, wherever true, will equally awe them from other heinous Sins: But where you ſee any of them live in habitual Drunkeneſs, Malice, Calumny, *&c.* (no unfrequent Caſe) it may be

concluded that ſomething elſe beſides Conſcience has ſway'd, and does ſway, them to the Refuſal of the Oaths. Sir *Tho. Moor*, one of the firſt that had Scruples about the King's Supremacy, ſaid, *he was content to be Heretical, if it ſhould prove to be ſo without a Party, or Proſeliting others to his Opinion*; but were we to judge by the Nonjurant Clergy, and others not content to enjoy Perſonal Quiet, unleſs they infect and Diſquiet others, congregate Aſſemblies, and perpetuate Sedition, one would think their Conſcience was all Cant, and their Faith Faction, to do all, in their Power, to deliver the Church to the Pope, and the State to the Pretender. Poor Narrow-Soul Men! to make the very Eſſence of Chriſtianity (a Kingdom not of this World) to depend upon a *State*-Queſtion, of their own Starting, about a ſingle Perſon's Right to a Crown; to live in the notorious guilty Omiſſion of not Praying for King GEORGE, when the Chriſtian Religion obliges us *to pray for our Enemies, for Kings and all that are put in Authority*, and the *Jews* under their Captivity practiſed both out of Intereſt, as well as Duty, according to that Sacred Advice, *that by praying for the Life of* Nebuchadnezzar *King of* Babilon, *and for the Life of* Belthſhazer *his Son, that their Days may be upon the Earth as the Days of Heaven; the Lord will give us ſtrength and lighten our Eyes, and we ſhall live under his Shadow and find Favour.* For excluding too out of Heaven not only his Majeſty's faithful Subjects, but Abundance of their own Friends and Well-wiſhers (unkindly done) by their turbulent nonſenſical Notions of *Shiſm.* (6.) Since it might have been predicted from the Temper and Striſe of our Party-Diviſions, that one would get the final Maſtery over the other; and every one had taken their Side, firſt made a Judgment of the Publick Safety, then of their own Intereſt and Proſpects, 'tis now neceſſary to ſubmit, as unto Fortune, and give a decent *Exit* to the vain Struggle; *Sic Fata volunt.* Is it your Chance to draw a Blank in the Lottery? Be content; 'tis unreaſonable to envy thoſe who have got the Prizes, ſo fairly drawn.

WHEN a People are ſo divided, there are but three Ways poſſible to unite together and become one; either that the *W---* come down to the *T---*, or the

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T--- move up to them, or meet one another Half-Way, in pitching upon Referees: the *First* is impracticable, becauſe it obliges to join in the Guilt of Unchriſtian Murmur and Diſatisfaction againſt Governours; if the T---- would condeſcend to the *third* Expedient, and pitch upon the plain Counſels of Holy Scripture for obeying Rulers, and ſpeaking no Evil againſt them, there can be no Referee ſo impartial or authoritative, the Difference and Diſtinction would ceaſe; as ſoon as they will pleaſe to unite themſelves to their Duty, and be reconciled to obey the Commandments of God, they are united and reconciled to the *W*---- ; let them once be ſo candid and religious to agree to this Compromiſe, and they entirely perform the *ſecond* thing wanted and deſired, *of coming over to the W*--- There is no Room to demur, when Neceſſity, Duty, and Emolument all determine to it. And ſeeing no Pretences of Conſtancy and Stedfaſtneſs; nor of being long of ſuch a Mind; nor good Opinion of one ſelf; nor of others, the greateſt Leaders; nor Numbers; nor the Commoneſs of Party and Diviſions; nor affected Doubting; neither the Plea of not accuſing one ſelf; nor the Power of Prejudice; neither the groundleſs Jealouſy about the Church; nor fretting about Places, are of any Validity (as has been ſhewn) to excuſe or extenuate their Delay, what Concern, yea what Indignation for being ſo long impoſed on, yea what Fear of having ſinned, yea what Deſire of returning ſpeedily to the Duty of a quiet Subject, ought to fill the honeſt and reflecting Heart?

EVERY one indeed has the Liberty to remain ſtill in the Vexation of confuted Error, but no other Reaſon for it. And if they will abuſe their Liberty at that unconſcionable Rate, the Misfortune heightens into Folly, their Inadvertency grows wilful, and ſettles in downright Obſtinacy. And as it is ſaid with good Reaſon, *the Wilful never want Woe*; I will lay down ſome certain Signs and Criterions of Obſtinacy, where Conſtancy ends, and that begins; ſhew ſome ill Effects of it; and conclude.

1. THE firſt Mark of Obſtinacy is, when the Thing or Truth in diſpute, is decided and adhered to by the *Will*, and not by the Reaſon or Underſtanding.

A Man may deal by his Underſtanding as he does by his Eye; when any thing comes in his Way, which he hates, or has been wont to diſlike, he turns it away, or blinks as if he did not ſee it: Thus, tho' it does not depend upon the Will to ſee that green which is blew, or that red which is yellow, yet it depends upon us whether we will turn the Eye and Diſcernment of the Mind, ſo long towards it, as to diſtinguiſh and be ſet right about it. If things then are not what we pleaſe, but what they are in their Nature and Verity, however we miſtake them; and we will not let the Underſtanding attend ſo long, as to find out the Miſtake, 'tis pretty plain, we have wound our ſelves into an implicit Reſolution, not be convinced or undeceived about the Matter. And for ſo long as the *Will* is the only Principle for being addicted to ſuch an Opinion, you have to deal with that worſt Temper of Mind, *Non perſuadebis etiamſi perſuaſeris*, tho' you have perſuaded them with the moſt abundantly ſufficient Reaſons for departing from it, you are ſtill as far off as ever from prevailing. Thus the ſullen *Stoick* of old, when he had nothing to reply to him that was convincing him, cried, *O damned Villain!* So the *Jews* of old were ready with their Stones and Reproaches againſt our Saviour, and his Diſciples, when they had nothing elſe to reſpond. So a *Jew* of late Years at *Oxford*, when he was in Diſputation confounded with the Truth, and had nothing to anſwer, cried for Madneſs, and was pale with Vexation, but ſtill continued a *Jew*: and a *Quaker*, under the ſame confured Circumſtances, is ſaid to anſwer a Biſhop of this *Dioceſs*, Peter, *convince me if thou canſt!*

2. ANOTHER ſhrewd Cogniſance is, when it is thought a Reflection upon a Man's Underſtanding to be miſtaken; this makes him imagine it more reputable to adhere to his former Opinion (right or wrong) than be conſtant to Truth: Thereupon grows peremptory, impatient to hear others differ from him, and turns his Back upon the reconciling Vertues of Deference, Gentleneſs, and being favourable to other Mens Reaſon, as well as his own. Of all the Properties belonging to our Species, we are ever moſt ſolicitous to hide, at leaſt not to own, Defects, Miſtakes,

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in conceiving or inferring Right, Misinformation, or Inadvertency in the Understanding; we are sooner brought to acknowledge Imperfections and Weakness in any Part, than there: Yet how many Imperfections natural, or acquired, is it really subjected to? Whilst every one is contented with his own Share, and speaks of no Want: 'Tis too painful and diminishing to be found mistaken in the false Imagination of the World. Observe in Wagers, 'tis the Loss of the Victory, in being in the Right, more than of the Money, that commonly troubles; and in any Matter of Contest or Dispute, if one of the Litigants will but begin once to yield that the other is in the Right, it often pleases so well, that the inflexible Man before, will be apt to return the Compliment, and be ready to submit to the Yielder. But some mean, I should say, proud Souls, are so incapable of being mistaken, and so very positive, that you may sooner perswade a tall Man he is lower by a Foot, or One low, that he is so much higher, than that he is deceived, notwithstanding we can no more alter Truth by our Conceits, than add one Cubit to our Stature. So far is Obstinacy from being a Sign of a strong Judgment, that it is constantly an Evidence of the contrary; your weakest People are always most noted for it, *they are sure it is, because it is so*; nor is it an uncommon Thing to be confident, when they are most mistaken.

3. ANOTHER Sympton is, when a Man thinks himself bound to use some shew of Reason and Argument, not because his Opinion is really built thereon, or not refuted; but because he is resolv'd to *hold that Opinion*; he catches at every Thing that offers to support him in it, and gives Audience to all Proof and most convincing Arguings to the contrary, as he would to a *Temptation*, which he thinks himself bound to resist; if no other Way, by stopping his Ears, or running away from it.

4. YOU may call it another Token of Obstinacy, when a different Opinion is defended by obscure Texts against plain: Probability, or *may be's* against the most certain and irrefragable Proofs, or by an Appearance of Reason and Argument against Experience: Absurdity has in truth no other Defence but that of Obscurity.

5. AN-

5. ANOTHER Characteriſtick of that, and of the Dereliction of the Vertue of Conſtancy, is, when People are ſway'd by other Motives and Affections than thoſe of Truth and Duty, Unity, and Charity; where they will neither Read nor Converſe, if they could help it, but on one Side; reſolving neither to put themſelves in the Way, nor diſpoſe their Minds for the Eviction of an Error, which they have not the Vertue to quit, when they perceive it.

With reſpect to the Conſequences of ſuch a determin'd Obſtinacy they are deplorable, but, as it now happens, pernicious only to themſelves; *the laſt Error is* abundantly *worſe than the firſt.* For a reſolute Neglect of that ſupremely rational Duty of uſing the Eye of the Underſtanding to diſcern and ſet us right, God often gives the Man, and his Underſtanding, over to a *reprobate*, undiſcerning, injudicious Mind, νὸν ἀδόκιμον. A Mind without Judgment is worſe than Eyes without Sight: There may be the Appearance of a fair Eye, as in the *Gutta Serena*, yet deſtitute of Sight; ſo in reſpect of ſome Things, you may keep Company with a Mind that has the Preſence of Rationality and the Looks of Judgment, yet void of Diſcerning; and this would be more amazing than the other, if it was not more common. When this acquired Blindneſs has overſpread the Faculties, the Man becomes incurable to Reaſon, and loſt to Perſwaſion; the very Powers of Reaſoning ſo often balk'd of their Purpoſe, and violently detain'd from their proper Uſe, are enfeebled, ſupinely ſtupid, and unreflecting in that particular Caſe; like a Man who has tyed up his Joynts ſo long as to have loſt the Exerciſe of them. To offer Violence to Truth, or its diſcovering Faculty, is the ſame as to offer it to God; and he who gives us our Underſtanding partakes of the Indignity, and intereſts himſelf ſo much in the Affront, as to *give them over to ſtrong Deluſions, to believe a Lye*, and readily acquieſce under Abſurdity and Contradiction (the Nonſenſe of the Underſtanding:) for a Recompence of perverſly ſtifling Conviction, and baffling the directing Powers, of his beſtowing, 'tis juſt with him to ſuffer them to looſe their Direction. Thus 'tis no wonder, that *Seducers wax worſe and worſe, deceiving and being deceived*; *ſpeaking*

very plain, and the Effects of it very evil, that it has Degrees, and is inſenſibly progreſſive to that which is incurable. And if ſo eaſy, honourable and ingenuous an Action, as acknowledging one's Miſtake, would preſently redreſs the paſt, prevent future ill Conſequences, and eſtabliſh Unanimity, who can be ſo hardy to refuſe, or delay the Expedient? When Religion, Reaſon, Intereſt, and all the Benefits of Unity ſolicit, and perſwade to it; the Love of Peace, the Duty of letting go Diviſions, the Conſcience of an Oath, oblige and importune; and the Dictates of Honour and Ingenuity, the aſſurance of Applauſe without, and of Peace within, conſtrain to it. Beſides, there are great Priviſeges attend ſuch an ingenuous Confeſſion; for an open Acknowledgment, in Conjunction with a faithful making it good, is of ſo much more Advantage than a ſilent Change of Behaviour, that it actually ſets a Man back five or ſix Years: 'tis like Reſtitution to the Publick, for the Injury of an erroneous Opinion, meet to wipe out Tranſgreſſions againſt it; when the corrupt Matter begins to run out of the feſter'd Sore in a viſible Quantity, it preſently heals. What Method better becomes thoſe who hold Places, that they may eat the Bread of the Government with a grateful Mind? 'Tis not only the beſt Days Work for them, but in general for all others, who have oppoſed the publick Meaſures, by their Active Endeavours, or by their Neutrality and Indifference, to make this wiſe and generous Revocation of their Carriage, ſolemnly proteſting againſt the like Inadvertency on their Part for the future: all who really and conſiſtently are, what they call themſelves, *Hanover T---*, have no more to do, but declare, wherever they come, *that they have been W--- all this time, but did not know it*; this would at once diſimbitter their Minds from Party-Paſſion, and recover them to the ſuſpended Bleſſing of God, of having *the Spirit of Love and of a ſound Mind*: They would deliver themſelves, out of Hand, from artificial Falſhoods, and the miſchievous Spirit of Suſpicion; they would reſign up Oppoſition, for good and all; be freer in Joys and Praiſes hitherto heſitated; follow any Trade but that of *State*-mending, ſince there is ſo little to be got by it; inſtead of Slandering and Murmuring, they

would reprove all guilty of it hereafter; in lieu of wiſhing to ſee any turn'd out, becauſe they are grown popular, and beloved, for their eminent Wiſdom, and Fidelity, to their King and Country, they would join all their Faculties and Aſſiſtance to ſupport them in that beſt Capacity of ſerving the Publick; in a Word, they would not only learn to bear better, but rejoice in, the Eminency of their Vertues; which bring in all advantagious Supplements and Securities to a bad Peace, and with them Univerſal Proſperity, Safety, and not meerly retrieve, but *encreaſe*, the *Britiſh* Glory and Puiſſance. The Country Gentlemen themſelves would all become Courtiers, deſerting their old Maxim of oppoſing the *Court*, right or wrong, when now they ſee it the reigning Faſhion there, to eſpouſe and cheriſh the *Country* Intereſt.

FOR now the bleſſed Time commences, for diffuſing a new Genius into all Ranks among us, for digging up the Root of old Party-Diviſion, and laying the Foundation of Peace and Tranquility for Ages and Generations. The *Hopes* of *Popery*, that inceſſant Factor for every Diſcord here, which has had Life and Vigour to plot and project under Nine Succeſſive Reigns, begins now to ſicken, deſpair, and dye, at the Proſpect of the *preſent* Race of Kings--- Behold! rejoice, and ſing, that the Time is come for the Law, which knows no Party, and will endure no Diſloyalty, to govern us all by *Righteouſneſs*; and for Religion, which diſſwades from both, to rule in our Hearts, with more Knowledge, with more Love and *Charity*, the end of the Commandment. *Behold* ſaith the Lord (*Jer.* 33. 6.) *I will bring Health and Cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them Abundance of Peace and Truth*--- Amen, ſo be it to GREAT-BRITTAIN.

FINIS.